



NAVY NEWS

APRIL 2015

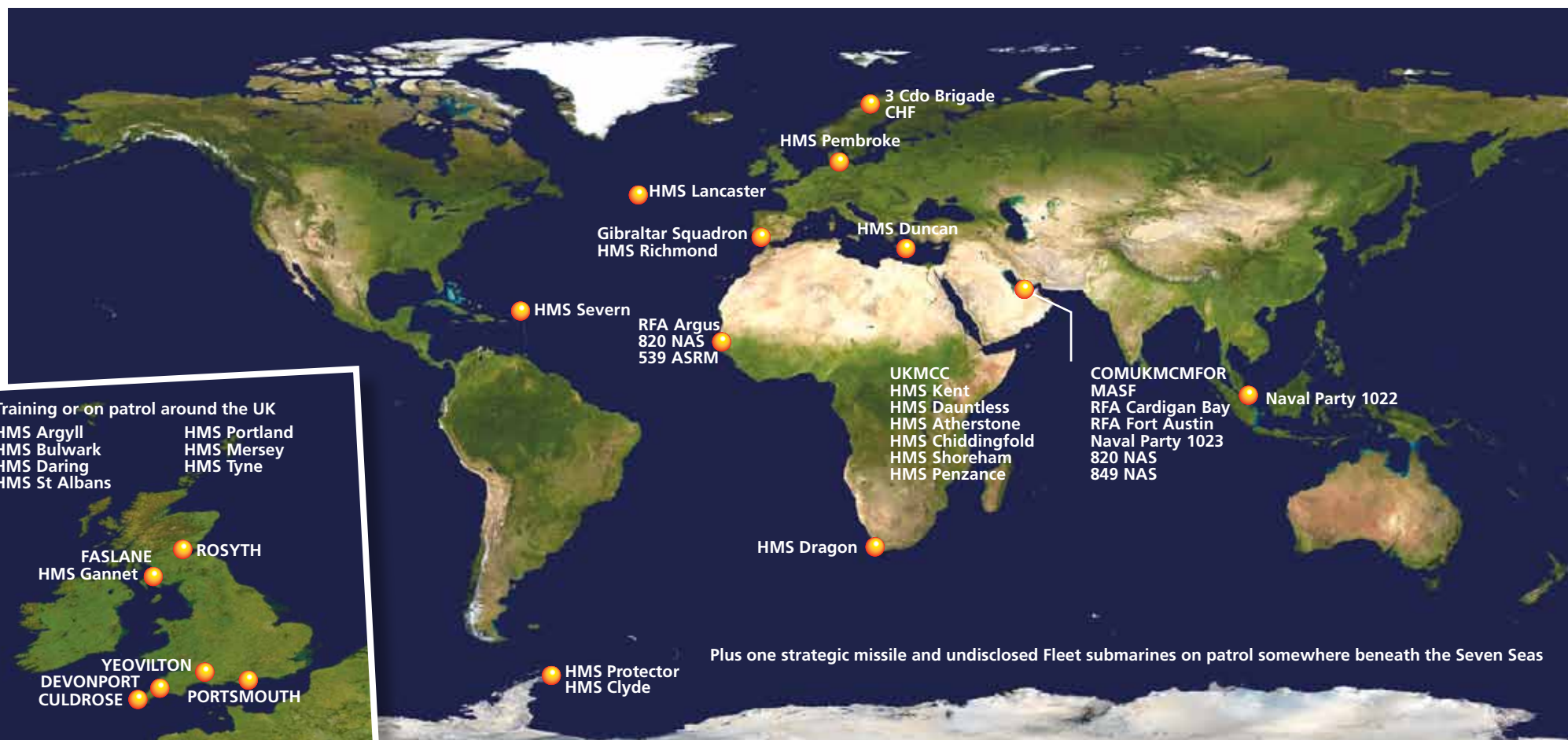


WINTER WHIRLED

● A Commando Helicopter Force Merlin Mk3 helicopter from 846 NAS extracts Royal Marines from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group from their final exercise as part of their Cold Weather Warfare Course in northern Norway. See pages 19-22.

Picture: PO(Phot)Mez Merrill





This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month

AS we move into spring, this month's edition of *Navy News* has a distinctly chilly feeling with the focus on training in Norway. **Royal Marines, Mountain Leaders** and the **Commando Helicopter Force** all spent time in the Arctic Circle for their annual cold-weather deployments (see pages 19-22).

HMS St Albans was also in Norway (see page 6) as she took part in a training exercise with the British Army and Norwegian commandos.

In the South Atlantic the crew of **HMS Protector** spent several days cleaning the shores of South Georgia (see page 5). Also in the region, personnel aboard **HMS Clyde** soaked up the stunning views during her final visit of the summer to the isolated island paradise (see page 6).

Also in the South Atlantic, but considerably warmer, was **HMS Dragon** and her tanker **RFA Gold Rover** (see page 4). The two British ships played a three-day game of cat and mouse with the South African submarine SAS Manthatisi off Cape Town on the latest stage of Dragon's Atlantic/Pacific odyssey.

Back in the UK and heroes were honoured as hundreds of Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel took part in events to commemorate the UK's military involvement in **Afghanistan** (see page 15).

Today's heroes were also in the spotlight as 33 Naval Service personnel received awards for their bravery in support of operations last year (see page 10), while WW1 VC hero Eric Gascoigne Robinson was the latest member of the Senior Service to be recognised with a commemorative paving stone outside his family home in Greenwich (see page 10).

This month there will be a substantial Naval presence off **Gallipoli** to mark the 100th anniversary of the landings – an occasion we commemorate with an eight-page supplement.

It's not every day you spy Royal Marines scrambling up the side of a passenger ferry but that is exactly what happened in Scotland (see page 3). Men from **43 Commando Fleet Protection Group** used ferry operator Caledonian MacBrayne's MV Caledonian Isles to practise their boarding technique.

Royal Marines were also busy in the Grampian area of the Highlands as Commandos training to be **Royal Marines Mountain Leaders** took part in Exercise Mountain Goat (see page 16). Much further south, Surrey in fact, green berets from Juliet Company, **42 Commando** took part in Exercise Precision Strike, laying the foundations for the unit to take over as the nation's on-call commando unit in 14 months' time (see page 16).

Back to ships and the Queen visited HMNB Devonport to rededicate **HMS Ocean** following the helicopter carrier and amphibious assault ship's refit (see page 7).

Families of the 100-plus crew of **HMS Torbay** crammed aboard a passenger boat in Plymouth Sound to welcome the T-boat home after six months away (see page 5).

The biggest change to the **Royal Navy's working uniform** in 80 years has begun with the first sailors receiving new working dress (see page 8).

Two men from the **Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch** carried out the very last 'Flying-MOT' of a Sea King Mk5 before the aircraft is retired from Service next year (see page 18).

The Royal Navy's most decorated photographer of the modern era, **PO Sean Clee**, has left the Senior Service after nearly 15 years of capturing some of the most famous images of the Royal Navy on the front line (see page 32).

Finally, back to ice and the **Royal Navy and Royal Marines Cresta** team successfully regained the Inter-Services title at the famous ice track in St Moritz (see back page).

All right Jack, we'll let you have a look



● Above, Jack the Bear on the 124th floor of the Burj Khalifa; Below, members of the ship's company meet Britain's No1 tennis player Andy Murray



WELL you could at least turn me around so I can enjoy the view...

On the 124th floor of the Burj Khalifa, Jack the Bear – and a good number of his HMS Dauntless shipmates – takes in the sights of the Middle East metropolis of Dubai, home to the Type 45 destroyer for two weeks during her mid-deployment break.

Having spent the last couple of months with the USS Carl Vinson carrier battle group as the American flat-top conducts air strikes against ISIS forces in the region, the Portsmouth-based warship put into the emirate to give her 200 sailors and Royal Marines a break... and allow for some larger-scale TLC on £1bn of state-of-the-art maritime technology.

The maintenance period coincided with the Dubai Duty Free Tennis Championship, and a few sailors were granted unique access to the tournament when Britain's best player Andy Murray took on Gilles Muller (the former Wimbledon champ triumphed over the Luxembourger 6-4, 7-5 for the record).

After the match, the Dauntlesses met Andy and presented him with a special RN baseball cap.

"I felt massively privileged to be given the opportunity to meet a Wimbledon champion. I thought I should take a token of my appreciation – but what do you give the man who probably has everything? Easy: an 'Andy'-embroidered HMS Dauntless baseball cap!" said LWtr Andy Burnett.

"Andy was very pleased with it, hopefully it will stick in his

mind if I am lucky enough to get selected to represent the RN volunteering at this year's Wimbledon tournament. Come on Andy!"

Other trips lined up for the ship's company during the break were a 4x4 trip into the desert outside Dubai, while the destroyer's cycling club worked up a sweat taking on the local routes including the Al Qudra Cycle Path.

And on a more formal level, Dauntless hosted the Deputy Commandant General Royal Marines Brig Richard Spencer.

He came aboard specifically to see how the green beret team from 43 Commando – the heart of Dauntless' board-and-search ability during maritime security work – were faring.

"It's been a busy few months since we sailed from Portsmouth – including maritime security on our journey out to the Gulf, hosting a Royal visit and providing air defence to the USS Carl Vinson – and I am immensely proud of all my ship's company have achieved so far through their hard work and determination," said the destroyer's CO Cdr Adrian Fryer.

"Rested from our break in Dubai we look forward to continuing our work with multinational partners throughout the region."

As for Jack, he belongs to Maddie Gordon, the daughter of Dauntless' photographer LA Ian Simpson and is used to give the youngster an idea of some of the places the RN has been operating over the past 12 months (Dauntless herself has only been away since Christmas).



mac attack



YOU can't beat a nice relaxing ferry crossing after the stress of a long car journey.

A pleasant 50-minute ride. Let someone else take the strain. Time for a cuppa, maybe an ice cream for the kids, a flick through the paper, stare out of the window and admire the scenery; the contours of Arran which apparently form the outline of a 'sleeping warrior', the snow-capped peaks, the dark red bricks of the homes in Brodick, the Royal Marines Commando dressed all in black scrambling up the side of the ship by rope ladder...

Like waterborne ninjas, the black-clad figures of the Fleet Contingent Troop – used for counter-drugs, terrorism and piracy operations around the globe – scrambled up the sheer 40ft side of the MV Caledonian Isles in the middle of the Firth of Clyde.

The troop consists of around 30 men from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group, all skilled in enhanced access and entry techniques...

...like this one on the busiest ferry route in western Scotland.

Since May last year, the team from the Faslane-based unit have been training with Scotland's principal ferry operator Caledonian MacBrayne on its Arran route.

Calmac's MV Caledonian Isles is perfect for ferrying upwards of three quarters of a million people to and from Ardrossan on the mainland every year.

It's also perfect for green berets who want to practise boarding vessels with a high freeboard – the distance between the waterline and the deck level – such as large cargo ships plying their trade in the Indian Ocean and Gulf... where teams from 43 are currently deployed aboard Her Majesty's Ships Kent and Dauntless.

Just so this doesn't come as a shock to the several hundred passengers, they're alerted to 'standby for action' over the Tannoy... and promptly press against the windows, smartphones at the ready... although some youngsters evidently seemed a tad reluctant to let go of their 99s...

From a ship handling perspective, the ferry's master has constant communications both with the boats on the water propelling the boarders on to the ladder, and the small contingent of Royal Marines aboard.

And despite rough seas, ferry and RIBs successfully completed continuous drills during the journey from Ardrossan to Brodick.

"Thanks to the kind support of Caledonian MacBrayne, one of our specialist troops was able to achieve significant training in demanding sea conditions, which will prove invaluable on operations," said Col Matt Pierson, 43's CO.

Although boardings like this are carried out on an almost daily basis on merchantmen east of Suez, it's a skill the FPG guys keep in their back pockets for duties in home waters too.

Only last summer, 43 Commando were called upon to bolster the security presence at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow by giving Scotland's police a unique 'on-the-water' capability.

Pictures: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald, FRPU North

Duncan and Richmond head east

THE Christmas trees and decorations will be up the next time Her Majesty's Ships Duncan and Richmond return from their patrols in the Middle East.

The destroyer and frigate both left Portsmouth to relieve their sisters – Dauntless and Kent respectively – on Operation Kipion patrols east of Suez.

Duncan, on her maiden deployment, will seamlessly slip into a US carrier battle group (currently it's that of the USS Carl Vinson).

And Richmond will concentrate her efforts on the wider international maritime security mission of counter-piracy, narcotics and terrorism, principally in the Red Sea and Indian Ocean.

And as with other frigates in theatre, Richmond will be launching her ScanEagle 'eyes in the sky' to provide her operations room team with live TV footage of whatever is happening on the surface of the ocean.

As for Duncan, as well as her main Sea Viper missile system, fired for the first time off Scotland last autumn, she's now also armed with Harpoon anti-ship missiles – fitted as part of an upgrade of two thirds of the Type 45 flotilla.

Safe-flying squadrons recognised

MORE than 1,500 hours of safe and successful sorties by RN ScanEagle drones have earned 700X Naval Air Squadron (X for 'Xperimental') the Bambara Trophy, presented each year to the Naval air squadron which does the most to promote flight safety.

It was formed specifically to oversee the work of the 22kg drones, providing flights – one ScanEagle, RN personnel and technicians from manufacturers Boeing InSitu who fly and maintain it – for five RN/RFA vessels in the Middle East.

In addition to overseeing work with ScanEagle, 700X will also be the 'go-to-guys' for any future unmanned aircraft the RN chooses to invest in.

Meanwhile the specialist squadron dedicated to keeping the military's manned aircraft flying received the Naval Capability Trophy.

1710 NAS, based in Portsmouth, are the Forces' rapid-response helicopter breakdown service – responsible for carrying out 116 repairs on 17 different types of aircraft from the Arctic to the Falkland Islands and Afghanistan in 2014.

In addition, 1710's modifications team delivered three urgent adjustments to the new Merlin Mk 2 helicopter in support of operations, not to mention 20 enhancements to other aircraft across the Armed Forces' inventory.

Dhabi days

MINEHUNTER HMS Shoreham represented the RN and UK at the biggest naval exhibition in the Middle East when she attended NAVDEX in Abu Dhabi.

The Sandown-class ship, based in Bahrain for three years, was used to showcase the wares of the UK defence industry's key exporters – and demonstrate to potential customers how the equipment could be used onboard an operational warship.



Dragon enters wall of fame

THE tell-tale masts of a submarine emerge from the sparkling waters of the South Atlantic as a would-be captain pits his wits against HMS Dragon and her tanker RFA Gold Rover.

The two British ships played a three-day game of cat and mouse with the South African submarine SAS Manthatisi off Cape Town on the latest stage of Dragon's Atlantic/Pacific odyssey.

After a mid-deployment break around the Cape of Good Hope in Simon's Town Naval Base, the Portsmouth-based destroyer and Gold Rover resumed duties with a visit to nearby Cape Town – a mixture of formal training with the South African Navy and flag-flying for the UK.

Dragon is only the second of the Royal Navy's Type 45 destroyers to visit the Cape (her older sister Dauntless led the way a couple of years ago) and the ship was granted a plum berth in the city's world-famous Victoria and Albert Waterfront in the shadow of Table Mountain.

Dragon hosted an official reception for 350 people, tours for interested groups and youngsters such as the International School of Cape Town, served as a showcase for British industry as part of the 'Great' Britain campaign, opened the gangway to 2,500 visitors in just six hours, and were generally all-round good eggs for UK plc...

...as one walker who'd injured his leg climbing Table Mountain found. He was stuck about 300 metres up the iconic peak, unable to make his way down.

Luckily a team from the ship was also hiking up the mountain, found the walker, and gave him a piggy back down to safety.

"Dragon was a real attraction whilst alongside in Cape Town and I was taken aback by how many people came on board," said Lt Cdr Josh Reilly, an Australian exchange officer serving on the destroyer.

"The South Africans seem genuinely impressed with the Type 45 and the questions were coming in thick and fast on the tours that I led around."

AB(CIS) Amy Dixon joined the ship in Cape Town: "What a great place to join! The official visit to Cape Town was a highlight and you cannot get better than a spot alongside in the Victoria and Albert Waterfront."

"With beaches, mountains and sharks all around there was certainly plenty to do and it was an awesome run ashore."



● Tugs help Dragon into Cape Town's famous V&A waterfront

Picture: Irene McCullagh

Duties in Cape Town done, Dragon and Gold Rover knuckled down to some anti-submarine warfare – a bit of a novelty as the destroyer is built to down enemy aircraft and missiles and the tanker is built to, er, tank.

So it was left to the destroyer's bow sonar and Lynx helicopter to find the Manthatisi (the RN's weapon of choice in the fight against the underwater threat is a hunter-killer submarine or Type 23 frigate with towed sonar).

"I've worked in the operations room with submarines before on exercises, but to do it with the South African Navy is something else," said AB(WS) Lewis 'Buck' Taylor.

"It was a hard couple of days trying to find the submarine, but I know all the team – and especially the underwater warfare guys – learned a lot from it."

And when the hunt relaxed, there was time for the ship's ten-strong Welsh contingent (aka 'The Taffia') to celebrate the land of their fathers by unfurling a large flag of Wales on St David's Day on the forecabin as Dragon punched through the South Atlantic, edging her way up Africa's western seaboard.

"Everyone has been getting stuck in over the past few weeks and Team Dragon continue to impress all they meet thanks to their can-do attitude and enthusiasm,"

said the ship's CO Capt Rex Cox.

"We are now heading north – and making our way home – but we still have an exciting programme in West Africa to complete first."

In addition to memories of South Africa, there's also a permanent reminder of the destroyer's first visit to the Commonwealth republic as she upheld a 90-year-old tradition.

A large painting of the ship's badge – featuring her namesake mythical beast – adorns the wall of the cavernous dry dock where she spent her mid-deployment maintenance period.

More than 150 crests are painted on the Norwegian granite walls of the dock in Simon's Town, going back to 1922.

It became tradition for sailors to paint their crests on the walls whilst their vessels were undergoing maintenance.

Dragon's sailors joined workers from ARMSCOR who run the dockyard to squeeze their crest between those belonging to wartime destroyers HMS Redoubt and Quadrant, whose badges were also given a fresh lick of paint.

The previous Dragon – a WW1 cruiser which served until 1943, when it was transferred to the Polish Navy – used the dock at least twice, but her insignia was either never added, or has faded over time.



● ET(ME) Will Conroy stands beside the new Dragon crest on the dry dock wall at Simon's Town next to the repainted insignia of HMS Quadrant... and a matelot version of Daffy Duck...



Exciting, thrilling, humbling

TAKING the helm as the Navy's ultimate 'people person' following a ceremony aboard HMS Victory is the new Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock.

The 52-year-old is the first marine engineer to hold the post – which has existed in various forms since the mid-1800s.

He formally took over from Vice Admiral Sir David Steel as the RN's third most senior officer in a supersession ceremony attended by Britain's highest-ranking sailor, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, and the United States Navy Vice Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Michelle Howard.

As Second Sea Lord, Admiral Woodcock is responsible for all personnel issues – among them recruiting, training and education, family issues and conditions of service.

"Today is perhaps the most exciting, thrilling and humbling day of my Naval career," Admiral Woodcock said. "I have been entrusted with one of the most significant roles in the Navy I love, the Navy I have served in for 34 years and the Navy which is the benchmark for all others."

"I am delighted to take over as Second Sea Lord at such an exciting time for the Royal Navy. We have some amazing things happening – new ships and submarines, a complete new aircraft fleet, and some serious modernisation of existing equipment going on. We will make the most of it."

Admiral Woodcock joined the Navy in September 1980 – on the same day as Admiral Zambellas. Admiral Howard, a guest at the supersession ceremony, is the US Navy's first female four-star admiral – the equivalent of an RN full admiral.

Ahead of the ceremony on Victory, which was held both in Nelson's Great Cabin and the quarterdeck, Admiral Steel was applauded out of the Navy's headquarters on Whale Island by almost all of its employees. He now leaves the Senior Service after 36 years in uniform.

Picture: LA(Phot) Des Wade

Portland tests navigators

TRAINEE navigators spent two weeks aboard HMS Portland as part of their specialist course.

The Devonport frigate sailed 3,500 miles around the UK to challenge the students, visiting the Western Isles of Scotland, Northern Ireland, Wales, southern England and the Channel Islands.

Five of the seven students passed the assessment, which as well as challenging waters, threw in additional problems, such as switching off key navigational aids – forcing the students to rely on sextants and stop watches.

The ship also paused in Scapa Flow for a service honouring the 833 men and boys who died when battleship HMS Royal Oak was torpedoed in 1939.

Time to prove Hurworth once again

HMS Hurworth put to sea for the first time in 12 months to begin life as Britain's most advanced minehunter – 30 years after she first entered service.

Thanks to the fibre-glass construction of Hurworth and her sisters in the Hunt class, the hulls last much longer than traditional RN ships – while equipment and systems inside can be replaced, allowing the vessels to remain at the forefront of minehunting.

Which is exactly what has happened to Hurworth, the latest Hunt to undergo the mid-life overhaul in Portsmouth Naval Base.

Ripped out during the refit were three large Rolls-Royce Deltic engines – designed in the 50s (they also powered British Rail locomotives) and installed in Hurworth when she was built in the early 80s.

In their place, two new Caterpillar Acer C32 engines, which are not only more efficient and powerful, but cleaner and much quieter than before – good for the economy, good for the environment and good for minehunting (some mines are triggered by sound).

After successfully completing a series of engine trials in Portsmouth Naval Base, the ship's 45 crew took her to sea for a week of trials and training on the first stage of Hurworth's work-up programme.

Beyond running in the Caterpillars, the first spell at sea saw trainers from the RN's Flag Officer Sea Training organisation throw in mock fires and floods, man-overboard, engine and steering break downs to see whether the sailors were up to the basics of operating a warship safely.

After that the ship moved on to coastal navigation, diving operations and launching her Seafox – a small remote-controlled submersible used to locate, identify and blow up mines.

An unexpected highlight of the week at sea was impromptu training with a Coastguard Search and Rescue helicopter, whose crew contacted Hurworth to practise winching.

They practised lowering and recovering a crew member from the minehunter's stern – its cluttered nature is ideal for simulating the challenge of lifting a sailor from a fishing vessel, and for Hurworth's crew it allowed them to hone skills which may, in an emergency, help to save someone's life.

"The wonders of modern propulsion technology have shown quite how much life remains in these brilliant little ships – and equally how much they can contribute to the defence of the UK, maritime security and diplomacy," said Lt Cdr Tom Trent, Hurworth's Commanding Officer.

"With new engines and new communication systems, this 30-year-old ship is now, nearly, back to full operating capability.

"My team is now relishing the chance to exploit this outstanding new kit during training and operations in the Gulf."

Training for Hurworth's crew continues through the spring, including taking part in the largest naval war games held in European waters, Exercise Joint Warrior off Scotland later this month.

Later in the year, her sailors will trade places with the crew of HMS Chiddingfold, which has already been through the upgrade, in the Gulf as part of the regular rotation of sailors aboard the four Royal Navy mine warfare vessels based in Bahrain.



Protecting the planet

NOSEY prepares for a nosey – diver AB Tom 'Nosey' Parker that is, preparing to enter the icy waters off South Georgia to ensure one of the world's most important nature sites remains mostly unspoiled by man.

Tom and his shipmates from the Navy's Antarctic patrol ship HMS Protector have spent several days cleaning the shores of the remote island – 700 miles from the Falklands – and surveying one of its natural wonders, the imposing Risting Glacier which spills into Drygalski Fjord towards the southern tip of the island.

Although today the mountainous British territory is best known for its rich wildlife – birds and seals especially, while the waters off the island generate more than £4m from fishing – for half a century, South Georgia was an important whaling centre.

Those stations closed in the mid-60s, but they – and especially the whalers which operated from them – continue to have an impact on the island's environment.

In the latter days of whaling at Leith – in the next huge natural harbour along from the South Georgian capital of Grytviken – several whalers sank in a snowstorm.

It fell to Protector's dive team to find the wrecks – and report on their condition, as the island's government feared fuel might be leaking from the vessels into the pristine waters.

Even though it's late summer in South Georgia (the equivalent of the second half of August in the northern hemisphere) the water temperature is only just above freezing.

Divers donned the standard RN-issue compressed neoprene dry suit on top of a combination of thermals and an all-in-one padded suit. Dive gloves and mitts help to offset the cold (a little) on hands. And there's the full-face mask – which must be completely dry.

Even with all these precautions, diving is limited to little more than 20 minutes before hands struggle with the cold.

It was considerably warmer and drier for Protector's sailors working on the foreshore to collect the detritus washed up from wrecks – more than a tonne of flotsam and jetsam was

picked up by the ship's company and scientists from the British Antarctic Survey.

All of which was rather strenuous "but in return we experienced some truly majestic scenery and fascinating wildlife," said LS (HM) 'Buster' Brown.

Protector was also asked to help remove empty fuel drums which, when full, had been distributed around the island by the Heritage Trust as part of a highly-ambitious programme to rid South Georgia of rodents.

Rats which arrived on the island courtesy of sealing and whaling vessels have a catastrophic effect on the bird populace, eating eggs and chicks and forcing storm and blue petrels among others to all but abandon the main island for others in the archipelago.

In spite of the deteriorating weather, the Protector team – led by her Executive Officer Cdr Richard Bird – managed to recover 22 used barrels.

"We're extremely pleased that we could play a significant part in this important – and world-leading – operation," he said.

"Despite the worsening conditions, the team were able to remove the barrels causing the minimum amount of disruption to the hundreds of seals and penguins on the beach."

Of equally-vital importance to scientists is what is happening to the five-mile-long Risting Glacier.

Protector headed up Drygalski Fjord from where she carried out a radar survey of the slowly-moving 'stream' of ice, snow and rock – and found that the glacier had shrunk, information and data that is now being analysed to look into the wider effects that climate change is having in the island's environment.

Having been away from the UK since October 2013 – a proportion of the 50-plus crew are rotated every few weeks to sustain Protector for so long – the icebreaker is due to return to her new home port of Devonport, where the rest of the RN hydrographic and survey flotilla is based.

Torbay's red-letter day

IF DEVIL'S Point isn't close enough to wave to loved ones returning from a tour of duty... try a pleasure boat.

Families of the 100-plus crew of HMS Torbay crammed aboard a passenger boat in Plymouth Sound to welcome the hunter-killer home after six months away.

With the jetty the T-boat was returning to unable to accommodate friends and family, the passenger boat was used – and suitably adorned with banners to greet the deeps, ahead of a proper reunion later on at Royal William Yard in Plymouth.

"Seeing my family after a long deployment and going on holiday with them is what I've been looking forward to most," said PO(ET) Justin Green.

"Time away from them is hard but what other career allows you to ease the separation with the fun of go-karting on Christmas Day at a top international track with my shipmates?"

Torbay spent the winter in the Mediterranean and Middle East – spending more than 15 whole weeks submerged (2,562 hours) as she added 19,653 miles to her odometer.

Even though it's the cooler time of the year east of Suez, at times it was a toasty 40°C in

the galley, where the boat's chefs got through 1,902kg of beans, 16,032 eggs and 20,040 sausages for breakfast (over the deployment...).

The boat hosted would-be submarine commanders for the seagoing phase of the (in)famous Perisher course, tested her mettle against NATO's finest in exercises off Crete, and paid her respects to WW2 dead at one of the island's Commonwealth War Graves cemeteries.

And while deployed a number of her crew earned their Dolphins – the badge of honour which signifies that its wearer knows the boat in and out.

Among those awarded the insignia, junior officer Sub Lt Craig Dymock: "It is an immense moment when you get presented with your Dolphins. The culmination of all your hard work pays off in that moment you are presented with them."

"It's been hard work combining my studying with duties on board. With being on watch and studying to qualify I would be working on average an 18 to 20-hour day. Yes it is a lot of work, but you really have to seize the opportunity by the throat and go for it if you want the honour of wearing those Dolphins."



Picture: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse




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Power to the PoW

THE first powerplant has been installed on the second of the nation's new aircraft carriers.

A Rolls-Royce MT30 gas turbine – capable of generating enough power to meet the needs of a town the size of Burnley or Guildford – was lifted into place on HMS Prince of Wales by the enormous Goliath crane at Rosyth dockyard.

According to manufacturers Rolls-Royce, for its size, no marine gas turbine on the planet is more powerful.

With two of the 120-tonne engines installed on the carrier, plus four diesel generators, the power hub of Prince of Wales will collectively generate around 109 megawatts – that's enough to provide all of Portsea Island or Swindon with power... or 300,000 kettles or 5,500 family-sized homes at any one time.

The Prince is taking shape in the cavernous dry dock vacated by her older sister Queen Elizabeth, while the latter is fitted out in Rosyth's non-tidal basin.

People should now get a better understanding of the national effort which is going into designing, building and finally crewing both 65,000-tonne vessels courtesy of a new visitor centre.

Looking out over the basin, the two-storey centre will host small groups. Downstairs features displays charting the history of carriers, the Aircraft Carrier Alliance – the coalition of the Navy, Whitehall and industry designing and building Queen Elizabeth and her sister HMS Prince of Wales – and what the future flagships will bring to the nation.

Upstairs there's a meeting room and, more importantly for the public, a viewing area looking across at the 920ft-long Queen Elizabeth.

The centre means the ships themselves are not inundated with visitors, for the primary concern is to finish them on time – and to do so safely.

"With several years of the programme still to go, having a dedicated area where industry professionals and select visitors can safely view 65,000 tonnes of aircraft carrier and find out more about its unique construction and history as well as their capability in supporting our Armed Forces is incredibly useful," said Ian Booth, Managing Director of the ACA.

"We receive lots of requests from interested parties to visit the carriers and unfortunately, with the ships still being under construction and safety being our number one priority, we cannot grant access to anyone who isn't working on critical activities."



Summer's final fling

MARK a cross where you think the sailor is in this photograph.

Yes, there is one, soaking up the views of the stunning wildlife as HMS Clyde paid her final visit of the summer to the isolated island paradise of South Georgia.

The ice washing ashore on the beach between the seals and penguins is proof that the austral winter is fast approaching.

Before icebergs, growlers, bergy bits and mountainous seas set in, the patrol ship left her more regular waters around the Falklands and headed out across 860 miles of the South Atlantic.

Aboard, aside from her 40 or so sailors, were two bomb-disposal experts to deal with old ammunition from the 1982 conflict found on the island over the summer and a structural engineer to assess the state of the derelict whaling station at Grytviken.

The latter was once home to around 300 men who for more than six decades processed the blubber, meat, bones and organs of the mighty mammals, until the station was closed in the mid-60s.

Once at King Edward Point, and with her passengers at work ashore, the sailors began to sample South Georgia's stunning wildlife.

A small team hiked the couple of miles over the mountains to Maiviken and 'Puppy Lake' – so called because of the abundance of young penguins and seals found there.

"Very few people will ever get a chance to go there – and most who do have to pay a lot for the privilege, so it was amazing to do

it as part of my job," said Sub Lt Jack Crallan.

"Maiviken is a beautiful place – very barren but also home to some amazing wildlife. It's great that we're able to conserve a place like that, where the plants and animals of the South Atlantic are protected from the outside world."

Other members of the ship's company met up with the island's British Antarctic Survey scientists, whose job it is to ensure South Georgia's largely-unspoiled environment remains that way.

Nearly two dozen people live at King Edward Point, with the main effort to monitor fishing stocks – the waters around the island are rich with the profitable Patagonian toothfish, mackerel, icefish and Antarctic krill.

Some Clyde sailors hosted scientists aboard their ship, while others were guests of the 'locals' ashore.

"After coming to this island for the first time nearly 30 years ago, the natural, rugged beauty never fails to amaze me – no matter what season," said WO Taff Summers, the ship's deputy marine engineer officer.

"The governor made everyone feel that they were part of a large family as we enjoyed some of the local delicacies freshly prepared by his wife."

The ship's visit also allowed her to carry seven sacks of mail as well as seven staff back from South Georgia to the Falklands; the team at King Edward Point spend anywhere between 16 and 24 months at a time there.

Before striking out for South

Georgia, the crew had to endure the RN's equivalent of Ofsted.

The assessors of FOST spent six days aboard Clyde making sure the patrol ship's latest crew were ready for anything the challenging conditions in the Falklands threw at them.

Clyde has been patrolling around the South Atlantic islands since 2007 with her crew changing roughly every six months – trading places with sailors on fishery protection ships operating around the UK.

The ship is now into its 16th change of crew – and each time a specialist team from FOST visits to ensure the new sailors have found their feet and are ready for operations.

After that, training shifted to working with other forces based in the Falklands – including the RAF's Typhoon jets, landing and launching an RAF Search and Rescue, carrying out maritime security patrols and providing lifesaving assistance to fellow mariners in distress.



Kryten lightens up the night

FOR a brief second the darkness of the Norwegian night is lit up by the flash of fire, the silence ripped apart by the roar of gunfire

This is 88lb of steel and thunder leaving the barrel of HMS St Albans' main gun at more than twice the speed of sound.

The Portsmouth-based warship put down 160 rounds of high explosive on to an island range by day and night during training involving the Royal Navy, British Army and Norwegian commandos.

The night shoot was by far the more dramatic as the stillness of the Norwegian night was broken first by the crackle of a radio message as a spotter on a remote, windswept island calmly relayed the target co-ordinates as H-hour approached.

Under the faint glow of the Northern Lights, there was a brief, but impressive display of neon light from the base bleed – a clever pyrotechnic in the base of the shell designed to reduce aerodynamic drag – following the words "Four-five, engage!" in St Albans' operations room.

And a few seconds later there was the distant crump of the shell impacting on Norwegian rock and earth ten miles away.

The shoot was the most comprehensive test for the gun, which was installed during a £25m revamp completed in the Saint's home base last year.

The frigate was the last ship in the Fleet to receive the latest version of the 4.5in gun, which has served the Royal Navy for more than 40 years, swapping the original curved model for the angular Mod 1 – nicknamed Kryten after the *Red Dwarf* character with similar rigid features.

"This exercise was the most stressful test the gun has had to date and thankfully it performed really well," said 'gun buster' PO Lisa Lee, whose team of engineers were called on to fix the ammunition feed mid-shoot so the gunnery could continue.

"It was particularly challenging but we pulled together and got the gun back on line. Some day troops on the ground may have to rely on it."

Kit and test facilities for T26s bought

MORE than £850m is being spent on machinery, equipment and test facilities for the Royal Navy's frigates of tomorrow.

Orders have been placed with BAE Systems to press ahead with the Type 26 programme – the ships which will begin taking the place of the current Type 23 or Duke-class frigates as workhorses of the Fleet early next decade.

The contract signed with BAE, which will build the new vessels at its yards on the Clyde, will pay for 'long-lead' items: equipment which can be bought now and installed when the hulls take shape: gas turbines, diesel generators and steering gear.

In addition, the money will be used to establish shore-testing facilities.

Around 1,700 jobs will be sustained as a result of this investment in the Type 26 programme, with firms in Derbyshire, West Yorkshire, Manchester, Cheshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire and Hampshire benefitting, as well as BAE Govan and Scotstoun facilities in Glasgow.

And £300m investment in F35 base

MORE than £300m will be pumped into the home of the Navy's next-generation strike fighter to meet the demands of the new jet.

Work will begin at RAF Marham in Norfolk to provide the infrastructure and facilities needed to operate the F-35 Lightning II.

Work is ongoing to improve community facilities at Marham, which is currently home to RAF Tornados, and a small team of RN trailblazers, including meteorologists, is already at the base as part of the long-term preparations for operating the new strike fighters.

Considerable improvements and new infrastructure are required for the F-35s, including heat-resistant landing pads being built to allow the jump jets to land vertically.

The Lightning II will be operated by the Fleet Air Arm and Royal Air Force in 809 NAS and 617 Sqn respectively with the jets moving into their new home near King's Lynn in 2018.

End of the King's reign in Falmouth

HAVING been seen by more than half a million, the helicopter star of an exhibition dedicated to those who save lives at sea has been removed from the National Maritime Museum in Falmouth.

Sea King XV663 – painted RAF yellow down one side, the Fleet Air Arm's trademark red and grey down the other, in honour of military rescuers – is off to pastures new.

The 70ft-long, six-tonne helicopter (which was never actually assigned to a Search and Rescue squadron during its 30-year active career) was the centrepiece of the display.

With the lifesaving exhibition having run its three-year course and XV663, which did play a key role in rescuing victims of the RFA Sir Galahad disaster, required for another display at the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovilton, the Joint Aircraft Recovery and Transportation Squadron carried out the move.

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Ocean's in the pink

SUBLIME in cerise, the Queen brought regal splendour to Britain's biggest warship as she formally welcomed HMS Ocean back into the Naval family.

Sporting a brooch designed and donated by the wardroom, the 88-year-old monarch was guest of honour as the helicopter carrier was officially rededicated in her home base of Devonport.

The Queen launched the ship 20 years ago on the Clyde and paid her fourth visit to the 21,000-tonne assault ship since attending the commissioning, again in Plymouth, back in 1998.

Seventeen years later, the Mighty O has just completed a £65m revamp to allow her to serve until the final years of the decade as the nation's on-call helicopter carrier.

Military and civilian staff – suitably equipped with mini Union Flags to add plenty of colour to proceedings on a magnificent spring day – lined the roads of the base to cheer the monarch, while at the jetty which Ocean herself towered over a 96-strong Royal Guard, the ship's company of sailors and Royal Marines Commandos, families, friends, and VIPs were entertained by the band of HM Royal Marines Plymouth performing the appropriate nautical tunes.

Having inspected the Guard, the Queen moved on board where the carrier's Commanding Officer Capt Tim Henry introduced members of the ship's company to her, who demonstrated some of the equipment they use, before the Royal guest dined with a select mix of the 380 sailors and commandos, then departed by Royal helicopter from Ocean's expansive flight deck.

"This was a chance of a lifetime and I wasn't going to miss it for anything," said AB(CIS) Natasha Hill, whose efforts in the Royal Guard were watched by her parents Debbie and Nick.

"Once we got the hang of the many rehearsals it was really enjoyable. But the actual event was rather nerve-racking. I was worried I'd get it wrong. But it went very well. I'll remember it for the rest of my life."

It was equally nerve-racking for Lt Tom McPhail, Ocean's gunnery officer, who'd co-ordinated the



● The Queen met the chefs who prepared the food for the receptions on board

Pictures: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse and LA(Phot) Ben Shread

parade training: the sailors manning the Royal Guard and Queen's Colour Party were drawn from across the ship's company.

"It brings together everyone in the crew in order to honour the Queen and the ship in which we serve. Training such a varied team to perform ceremonial duties, and to such a high standard, is a real, but rewarding, challenge," he said.

The carrier's second-in-command Cdr Tony Rackham likened proceedings to "Cup Final Day – the culmination of years of preparation of the ship from refit to getting ready for sea and operations and then rehearsing for our Royal sponsor. It can't get any better than this. It's real reward for all our hard work."

As for the brooch, paid for by him and his fellow officers, it depicts Oceanus rising from the waves brandishing a trident.

HMS Ocean will take part in the latest Joint Warrior exercise off north-west Scotland in late April and come June she will relieve HMS Bulwark as the nation's flagship.



● The Queen wore her new brooch of Oceanus rising from the waves

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Going for 'broke

THROWING up a column of water, this is the demise of a 70-year-old 500lb bomb – one of several pieces of old ordnance either neutralised, or located, by the experts of HMS Pembroke.

Wars past continue to occupy warships present as Pembroke and her fellow minehunters in a NATO force focused on the detritus of 20th Century conflicts in the North and Baltic Seas.

Pembroke alone located nine pieces of unexploded ordnance just off the busy shipping lanes leading to Kiel – Germany's principal naval base and her main Baltic port.

Pembroke's specialist dive team then placed markers to allow the WW2-vintage ordnance – mines, bombs and torpedoes – to be safely disposed of at a later date.

"Diving on period mines provided the dive team with an opportunity to examine the type of ordnance we actually train for, although it's not often the occasion comes around," said Lt Pete Needle, Pembroke's operations officer.

The Sandown-class ship, normally based in Faslane, has been attached to NATO's Mine Counter Measures Group 1 since the beginning of the year, one of five assigned to the international force from Germany, Netherlands, Poland and Belgium, plus flagship German support vessel FGS Donau.

The group has been ranging around the Baltic and North Seas, calling in at Gdynia in Poland and Amsterdam in the Netherlands, where it met up with NATO's second minehunting force, which normally operates in the warmer waters of the Mediterranean.

The two groups linked forces for Operation Beneficial Co-operation, a long-standing mission by European navies to deal with the detritus of conflict – HOD in NATO parlance, 'historic ordnance disposal'.

The Dutch Navy alone has dealt with more 1,000 old mines, bombs and depth charges and the like in the past decade off its coast.



Raid remembered

SAILORS from HMS Tyne and Royal Marines of 42 Commando marched on the wet cobbles of Falmouth as they honoured one of the greatest raids in naval history.

In March 1942, a flotilla of destroyers and small boats left the Cornish port to blow up the dock facilities at St Nazaire.

They succeeded, ramming a former American destroyer – under the White Ensign as HMS Campbelltown – into the lock gates and blowing her up, while commandos destroyed dock installations.

Operation Chariot, as it was codenamed, was later dubbed 'the greatest raid of all', but the price paid by the sailors, Royal Marines and commandos involved was fearful.

Of the 621 men who took part in the raid, a quarter were killed and three out of five were casualties (the rate was even higher among the commandos; nearly three quarters were killed, wounded or captured). Upwards of 400 Germans were killed and the port was never again used by German capital ships.

Taking a break from her patrols around the UK to protect fishing stocks, Tyne sailors and today's commandos attended a short service of commemoration and wreathlaying in Falmouth Cemetery at the graves of LS William Savage – awarded the Victoria Cross for his part in the raid – and Leading Motor Mechanic Tom Parker.

Tyne's marching platoon then formed up outside Falmouth municipal buildings alongside the 42 Commando men and, led by the Kernow Pipes and Drums Band, marched to Prince of Wales Pier.

There a memorial service was conducted by Naval Chaplain the Rev David Wylie.

"We don't take part in that many parades being at sea so much of the time," said LCH David Britten.

"I felt really proud to be in uniform marching through the town today, especially with so many veterans making the effort to attend."

May the (new) 4s be with you

THE biggest change to the Royal Navy's working uniform in 80 years has begun with the first sailors receiving new working dress.

Outgoing Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir David Steel handed out the first T-shirts, fleeces and jackets to officers and ranks at Portsmouth Naval Base, as clothing stores across the Senior Service did likewise.

Although updated and with different materials used in the manufacture, the Royal Navy's daily working rig – known as No.4s – hasn't fundamentally changed, certainly not visually, since the current uniform was introduced in the 1930s.

Its successor – the Personal Clothing System, although in day-to-day Jackspeak it'll still be referred to as No.4s – is more comfortable, more modern, and more resistant to fire.

The biggest difference the public will notice is that the shirts are dark, not light blue.

That's part of the drive to make the uniform look 21st Century in keeping with modern ships and modern technology. It's also branded with a large White Ensign on the left shoulder

As well as these cosmetic changes, the replacement clothing is flash retardant – giving sailors four seconds to act should they be touched by fire – and a 'layered approach' should make the wearer much more comfortable.

Standard wear will be T-shirt, jacket and trousers. In cold climes, personnel can add a microfleece.

The layered nature of the replacement clothing means that at the height of summer – when temperatures will be well over 40°C – standard working dress will be T-shirt and trousers.

Some 22,000 sets of the new uniform are being ordered – the stores at Nelson alone are responsible for issuing more than 62,000 items to more than 4,300 sailors in 102 units by the beginning of August.

It will take around 12 months for the entire front-line RN to be issued, with entire ships or units receiving it in one go.

The first Portsmouth-based unit to collect the new uniform was the Mine Warfare Battle Staff – heading off to the Gulf shortly to direct the operations of the four British minehunters permanently stationed in the region.

"Will I miss the old uniform? Not one bit," said the staff's Lt



● Lancaster's AB (CIS) Sam Scott and LET Chris Elliott wearing the new uniform on the Type 23's flight deck

Cdr Jason White. "I've been in the Navy 20 years and they've been constantly talking about replacing it. Now they have – and it's very welcome.

"The Australians and Americans have new kit. We've been dressing looking like it's the

1940s. And it's not practical in the heat."

The men and women of HMS Lancaster are the first to deploy in the new No.4s, testing it in the heat of the Caribbean in the spring and summer, and the cold of the South Atlantic in the

austral winter.

"We're extremely proud – and genuinely delighted – to be the first ship to wear the new uniform," said Cdr Peter Laughton, the Red Rose's Commanding Officer.

"It is a really practical, smart and modern uniform, and the extra branding allows us to much better represent our Service.

"This will most certainly be the case during our current deployment where we are due to transit in excess of 30,000 nautical miles and visit up to 18 different countries."

A version of the new clothing was tried out in several ships and submarines three years ago – with the feedback given by sailors (pockets snagging and unpopular belts) used to adapt the final version being issued.

Vice Admiral Steel said the input of sailors was vital – they're the ones who'll be wearing the new uniforms, after all.

"It is time for the individuals in the Navy to change the way they are presented. We have always been professional, but we did look a bit out of date," the admiral said.

"This is a modern uniform which suits a modern Navy. But the most important thing is that it is comfortable to wear in the extremes of climate in which the Royal Navy operates – from the Antarctic to the Gulf.

"We have trialled it extensively and the feedback has been mostly positive, resulting in producing something which our sailors want to wear."

After the roll-out to the RN is completed, the plan is to move on to the RFA and ultimately the Sea Cadets.



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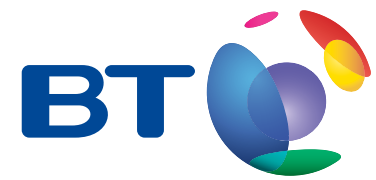
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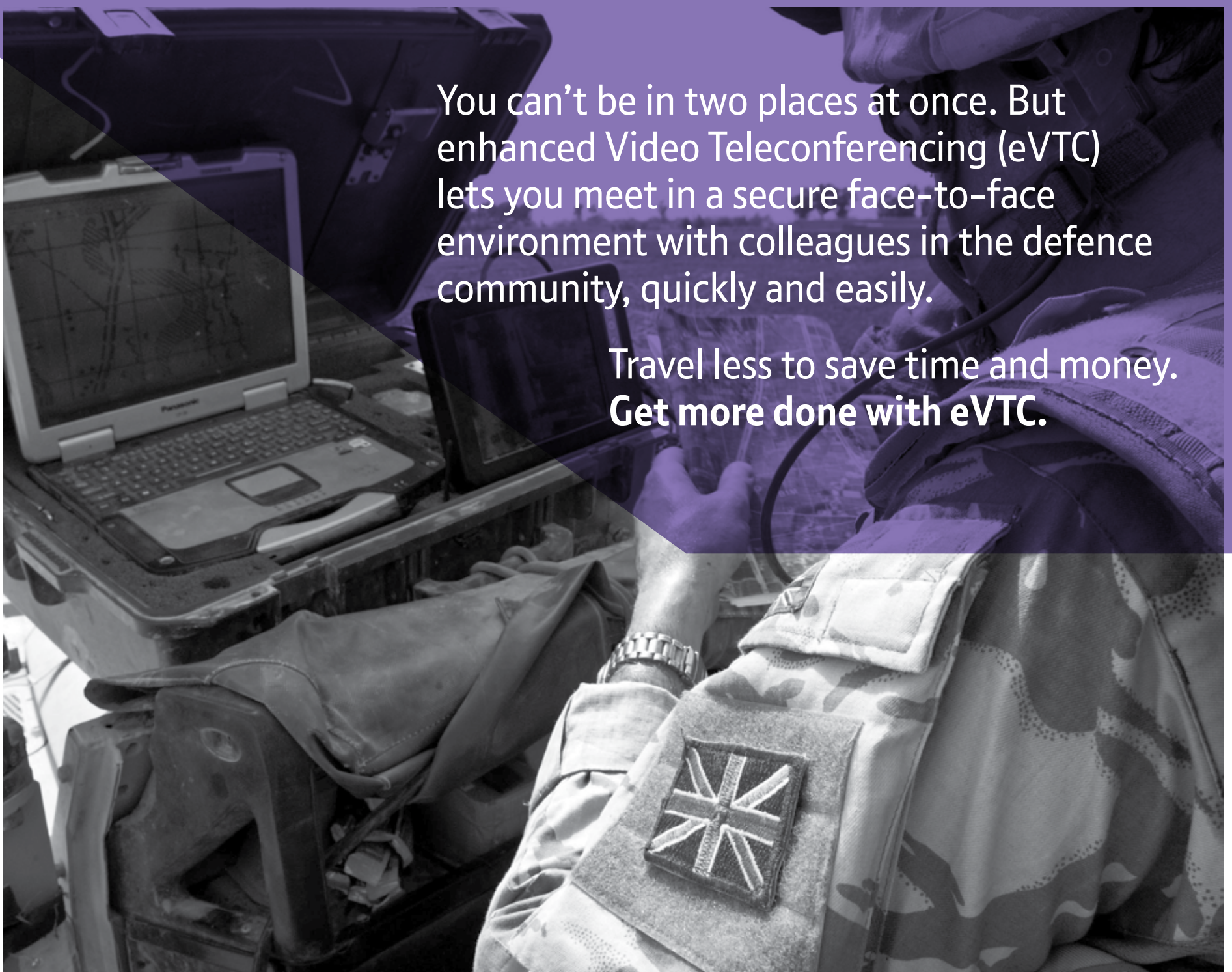
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Honouring today's heroes

THE Royal Navy's disaster-relief work in the Philippines has resulted in operational honours for five officers.

The five are among 33 Royal Naval personnel to receive awards for their bravery in support of operations last year.

But the highest honour went to **Lt Cdr Chris Götke**. He was awarded the Air Force Cross for safely landing a 60-year-old Sea Fury T20 – which had suffered an engine failure – at the Culdrose Air Day last summer.

Capt Mike Utley was awarded the OBE for his role as Commanding Officer of HMS Illustrious during the humanitarian mission in the Philippines.

The ship was returning from the Middle East to the UK for Christmas when it was diverted to help with the relief effort.

Capt Utley quickly devised a simple but thorough plan to fully utilise the ship's aviation and medical capacity.

Lt Cdr Steven Wall, second in command of HMS Daring, received the MBE for his work in the Philippines.

He led working parties ashore, taking charge of up to 50 people at any one time. He quickly determined the essential needs of ten communities across seven islands, delivering support to more than 10,000 people.

Lt Wendy Frame received the MBE for her work as deputy marine engineering officer on board HMS Daring. She repaired vital water wells and rebuilt school buildings, ensuring a small island community of 200 young families had their first access to clean drinking water since the typhoon struck.

Cdr Philip Hally, who was Commander Logistics on board Illustrious, received the MBE. He organised the rapid embarkation of 500 tonnes of relief aid in two days.

Lt Cdr Graeme Walker – Daring's Lynx helicopter pilot during the operation – received a Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service. During eight days he conducted reconnaissance sorties covering 1,400 miles and transported 30 tonnes of humanitarian aid and moved 247 personnel.

Lt Cdr Edwin Cooper, who was 01 Flight Commander for 829 Naval Air Squadron serving onboard HMS Illustrious, also received a QCVS. He led a team of engineers and aircrew



AIR Force Cross recipient Lt Cdr Chris Götke was flying a Sea Fury T20 as part of the Historic Flight display at Culdrose Air Day when the plane began to lose power during his aerobatic display.

As 21,000 people watched, the Sea Fury began billowing smoke and started to lose altitude leaving Lt Cdr Götke with the unenviable choice of bailing out or staying with the aircraft.

"I was at about 1,800 feet when I put the power on and nothing happened – it was the most horrible shock in the world," he said. "I pulled up the gear,

reducing drag and when the aircraft started to fly I decided that I would stay with the aircraft and try and get her down in the best landing possible."

Attempting to land on the runway he got one wheel down while the other locked, resulting in the Sea Fury's undercarriage collapsing and it veering off the runway. Harmlessly coming to a rest on the grass, the aircraft sustained only minor external damage while Lt Cdr Götke, who is the CO of the Historic Flight based at RNAS Yeovilton, had no significant injuries.



ROYAL Navy winchman PO Russ Adams was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal for rescuing five men aboard a French fishing vessel.

Battling mountainous 30ft waves in the pitch black, the crew of the Sea King helicopter also had to fight against 60mph gusts off the Cornish coast.

The crew of the vessel – Le Sillon – were ordered to jump into the water one by one so that PO Adams could swim to them and then winch them back up to safety.

"It was really difficult to swim in

those conditions," he said. "The fishermen just had to trust us when we told them to jump into the water – that must have been horrendous for them."

PO Adams saved the first two fishermen, but as he returned for a third, a huge wave crashed over him, fully submerging him.

Close to exhaustion, he then inflated his life jacket to remain buoyant and winched the terrified man back to the waiting helicopter.

After changing into a fresh life jacket, PO Adams then rescued the two remaining crew members.

responsible for maintaining and operating the Flight's Merlin helicopter.

The team achieved a remarkable flying record of twice the normal rate for any other recent UK operation and delivered over 103 tonnes of humanitarian aid as well as moving over 500 people during the relief mission.

Lt David Starkey, second in command of minehunter HMS Atherstone, also received a QCVS. When a diver suffered difficulties during a joint UK-US

exercise in February 2014 – and had to conduct an emergency ascent – Lt Starkey immediately took charge of the incident in a cool and professional manner.

A Royal Navy winchman who risked his life repeatedly to save five French fishermen from almost certain death was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal.

PO Russ Adams rescued five men trapped on a badly-damaged French fishing vessel in the middle of a raging storm off

the coast of Cornwall.

Royal Marines Staff Sgt Paul Billingham received the Military Cross.

CPO(D) Richard Brown from the Northern Diving Group received the Queen's Commendation for Bravery, as did Lt Cdr Rob Suckling, from HMS Gannet.

RM Cpl Jonathan McKeag received the Queen's Gallantry Medal. Col Jaimie Roylance was made an OBE for his work in Afghanistan; Maj Tom



HMS Daring's deputy marine engineering officer, Lt Wendy Frame, pictured above left, was one of the first people to arrive in typhoon-hit Philippines.

She helped ensure a small island community had their first access to clean drinking water.

As well as damaging wells and schools across the Philippines, many boats were damaged which were the sole source of income and fresh food for the fishing communities.

Lt Frame delegated her team to repair some of the vessels. Over nine days Daring and her crew surveyed 42,200 square miles covering more than 70 islands. They treated 300 patients and delivered 21

tonnes of stores and 7,656 litres of fresh drinking water.

Lt Frame, who is due to get married in the summer, said she was delighted to be made an MBE.

"I was shocked when they told me," she said. "I had to read the letter four times before it would sink in. I called my fiancée Adele straight away and then my mum Heather who burst out crying."

Shortly after arrival in the islands, Lt Frame and her team of engineers rebuilt two classrooms that had been completely destroyed on Guintacan.

"For me the reactions of the people we met was something I will never forget. It was the best experience I have had in the Navy so far."

Ryall was made an MBE for outstanding performance, as was WO1 Sam Doak; LNN Laura Fallon received the Associate of the Royal Red Cross 2nd Class; C/Sgt Ruairi Dwyer was mentioned in despatches.

QCVS awards went to Maj Bruce Anderson and Lt Cdr Brad Watson and Lt Paul White, both from 857 NAS.

Capt Rob Bellfield, from UKMCC in Bahrain, received a QCVS, as did WO1 Kris Chard, of HMS Shoreham, AB Matthew

Harriss, from UKMCC, CPO Ken Kennedy from HMS Montrose, Lt Aleesha Mitchell from UKMCC, Lt Cdr Matt Kent from UKMCC, Sgt Dean Jones and Lt Col Finlay Walls, for his work in South Sudan.

CPO Darren Lennon and Cdr Charles Maynard received a QCVS for their work aboard the USS Harry S Truman.

Cdr Dan Clarke, CO of HMS Triumph, was made an OBE, as was Cdr Mike Smith of HMS Somerset.

.... and a hero from yesteryear

DAMPENED by the rain which fell on the nation's capital in abundance, this is the impressive slab honouring a Naval hero – unveiled 100 years to the day of his immortal deed.

Today's sailors and Royal Marines saluted Eric Gascoigne Robinson VC, the latest member of the Senior Service to be recognised with a commemorative paving stone outside the family home – in this case Diamond Terrace in Greenwich.

More than 1,300 Victoria Cross winners from the Great War are being so honoured in their native boroughs with 'Kipper' Robinson the third sailor to receive Britain's highest military honour.

On the afternoon of February 26 1915, a party of 100 Royal Marines and sailors were sent ashore near Kum Kale in Turkey as part of the opening moves of the Gallipoli campaign.

Led by torpedo officer Lt Cdr Robinson, the sailors were to destroy coastal and anti-aircraft batteries.

Almost immediately the sailors became pinned down by enemy fire.

Robinson told his men to take cover while he went on, alone, evading the fire of snipers, and found the guns unoccupied.

Gun cotton charges destroyed two of the weapons, but Robinson scurried



● The commemorative slab at Diamond Terrace, Greenwich, which honours Eric 'Kipper' Robinson, pictured above

back down the hill for a second charge to finish off the task while the guns of the battleships brought down an iron rain upon the Turkish positions.

From the bridge of Vengeance, it seemed to Capt Bertram Smith that Eric Robinson was in his element "strolling around by himself under heavy fire – like a sparrow enjoying a bath from a garden hose."

Having dispatched the guns on Achilles Mound, Robinson led his party to Orhanie, blew up a 9.4in gun, then began to return to the picket boats moored at Kum Kale pier. They got as far as the village cemetery – where the Turks offered fierce opposition, using a large domed mausoleum as their nest of resistance. Somehow Robinson got a message back to his ship whose guns

"sent the tomb and fragments of its inmates – both ancient and modern – flying heavenwards."

Robinson would go on to repeatedly demonstrate his fortitude under fire during the bungled campaign, culminating in leading another demolition party to scuttle the submarine E15 which had run aground.

That latter mission was worthy of



Britain's highest award, but it was for the raid on Orkanie that 'Kipper' Robinson was awarded the VC, much to the surprise of Cdre Roger Keyes, chief-of-staff of the Gallipoli operation.

"I am honestly lost in admiration for Robinson, he has done splendidly and I honestly am surprised," he wrote. "I did not think much of him as a First Lieutenant. But that evidently does not prevent him being an exceedingly brave man."

Members of the Robinson family attended the unveiling with dignitaries from Greenwich, and RN personnel, led by Commander Operations Rear Admiral Matt Parr who was in awe of Lt Cdr Robinson's "selfless actions".

He added: "His courage, determination and fortitude in the face of overwhelming enemy action remain an example to us all; I am delighted that this commemorative stone will serve as a permanent memorial to a remarkable man."

Eric Robinson left the RN in 1933 as a rear admiral but was recalled to service when war broke out, directing Atlantic convoys in the face of the U-boat menace.

He retired a second time in 1944 and settled in Petersfield in Hampshire.

He died in 1965 aged 83.

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Picture: PO(Phot) Paul Punter

Taming of the shrewd

A TESTING eight-month maiden deployment saw HMS Astute cover more than 24,000 miles – and declare herself more than ready for the years ahead.

The first of her class, HMS Astute left Faslane and, after completing operational sea training, is pictured above leaving UK waters in March last year.

First stop was the central Mediterranean, where she provided Tomahawk Land Attack Missile support as well as ongoing backing to anti-terrorism operations. The boat worked closely with the US Navy, regularly taking part in practice strikes with units often hundreds of miles apart.

Next for the shrewdly-named vessel was a Suez Canal transit to the Red Sea and Gulf of Oman, where the sea surface temperatures were regularly in excess of 34°C.

There was also time for some relaxation with the crew enjoying a steak night courtesy of one of her affiliates, the Worshipful Company of Joiners and Ceilers.

The nuclear submarine's next port of call was Fujairah in the UAE, where many of the ship's company took a break to spend time with their families.

Back at sea Astute conducted further tasking, this time supporting anti-smuggling operations in the Gulf of Oman. The boat took part in anti-submarine exercises to test US Navy and Royal Navy ships. Astute was joined by HMS Northumberland, the USS Annapolis and RFA Diligence.

Astute returned to the Med, with the ship's company racing the boat through the Suez Canal by taking part in the famed 'row the Suez' competition, where the crew take it in turns to match the submarine's pace through the canal.



● Cdr Gareth Jenkins is presented with the Jolly Roger cake; Students and their instructor for the Perisher

The boat arrived in Souda Bay, where Cdr Gareth Jenkins took over as commanding officer from Cdr Stephen Walker, before sailing for an anti-submarine warfare exercise with the US and French navies.

The crew took some time out to mark the 100th anniversary of the first use of the Jolly Roger in the Submarine Service. Two cakes were baked, one of the Jolly Roger and one of the White Ensign. The chefs ate the largest portions (seems fair, they made them).

Next on the agenda was a trip to Crete to collect five students and their instructor for the UK Submarine Command Course, known as Perisher.

One of the most challenging courses in the Armed Forces, it is designed to test potential submarine commanding officers to their limit and has a success rate of 50 per cent.



The first Perisher course to be conducted on an Astute-class submarine and entirely in the Med, the students had to learn quickly how to drive an A-boat. The final port of call was Gibraltar, where many of the crew took the opportunity to run up the Rock to enjoy the fine view.

The now fully operational front-line warship made the final leg home between Gibraltar and Faslane, where she was met by her sponsor, the Duchess of Cornwall, who launched the boat in 2007, along with some of the families of the crew.

Astute was laid down at BAE's submarine facility in Barrow-in-Furness on January 31, 2001 – 100 years to the day after the keel was laid down for the Royal Navy's first submarine Holland 1.

She is the second RN submarine to bear the name – the first was the WW2 Amphion-class boat.



Class: Astute-class Fleet submarine
Builder: BAE Systems, Barrow-in-Furness
Laid down: January 31, 2001
Launched: June 8, 2007
Commissioned: August 27, 2010
Displacement: 7,519 tonnes
Length: 97m (318ft)
Beam: 11.3m (37ft)
Draught: 10m (33ft)
Speed: up to 30kts submerged
Complement: 98
Propulsion: Rolls-Royce PWR 2 nuclear reactor
Range: limited only by the storage of food and need for maintenance
Weaponry: 6 x torpedo tubes for up to 38 Tomahawk cruise missiles or Spearfish torpedoes
Sensors: Sonar 2076 (with a range in excess of 3,400 miles)

Facts and figures



PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

OF THE half a million men who became casualties of the ill-fated attempt to force the Dardanelles and take Constantinople, the names of most, outside the realm of immediate family members, are lost to history.

The name of Rupert Brooke continues to resonate – a literary celebrity in his age, today he's perhaps best remembered for the opening lines of his sonnet, *The Soldier*:

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England.

Brooke wrote those words in the autumn of 1914 when war still possessed some romantic adventure. They were published the following spring and read out in St Paul's at its Easter Day service.

By then, however, Sub Lt Rupert Brooke – as he was – was gravely ill, first of sunstroke and dysentery. He turned down the opportunity to serve on the staff of the Dardanelles campaign's commander, Sir Ian Hamilton, preferring to remain with his men in the Hood Battalion of the Royal Naval Division.

He'd also turned down the chance to recuperate in a military hospital in Egypt, where the division had acclimatised and trained for its mission on the Gallipoli peninsula. When the Hoods sailed for the Aegean in mid-April 1915, Brooke sailed with them – though confined to his sick bed.

By the time the ships carrying the division had reached the island of Skyros, 120 miles southwest of the Dardanelles, the 27-year-old junior officer had recovered sufficiently to perform duties and take part in training.

But after a day ashore with his men on April 20, he retired to his cabin with a swollen lip. He spent the next day confined to his bed, the day after largely in and out of a coma – by which time the division's medical staff had diagnosed septicaemia (blood poisoning), caused by a mosquito bite whilst in Egypt.

Brooke was transferred to a French hospital ship, whose personnel gave the young poet their full attention – he was their sole patient. French surgeons operated, but the infection had spread too far. On the afternoon of April 23, Brooke died in his cabin "with the sun shining and the cool sea-breeze blowing

through the door and the shaded windows," wrote his friend and music critic Denis Browne – who would die in Gallipoli in early June. "No one could have wished for a quieter or a calmer end than in that lovely bay, shielded by the mountains and fragrant with sage and thyme."

Brooke was buried that night in an olive grove on Skyros in a short but "most romantic funeral", his grave marked by a simple wooden cross and the inscription:

Here lies the servant of God, Sub Lieutenant in the English Navy, who died for the deliverance of Constantinople from the Turks.

A century on, and perhaps the biggest surprise – beyond the fact that Brooke's poetry endures alongside the darker work of Owen, Sassoon and McCrae – is how much the death of one man possessed the minds of commanders on the eve of the greatest amphibious operation ever attempted.

Expedition leader Sir Ian Hamilton – himself a soldier-writer/poet – had been troubled by news of Brooke's illness throughout April. News of his passing left him stunned. "Death on the eve of battle, death on a wedding day – nothing so tragic save that most black mishap, death in action after peace has been signed," he recorded in his diary. "Death grins at my elbow. I cannot get him out of my thoughts. He is fed up with the old and sick – only the flower of the flock will serve him now, for God has started a celestial spring cleaning, and our star is to be scrubbed bright with the blood of our bravest and our best."

Winston Churchill, the driving force behind the Gallipoli expedition, was equally moved, writing a tribute in *The Times*: "Only the echoes and the memory remain; but they will linger."

■ (Clockwise from top left): Brooke's simple, original grave covered with pink and white marble (Q 71075), a portrait of the poet (Q 71073), the grave subsequently erected (Q 71656) and as it looks today.

These photographs are among more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



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Squadron provides essential answers



● Instow-designed armour on a Mk3 Rigid Raider (above) and a Land Rover goes through deep water (below)

LAND vehicles and deep, salty water do not normally mix.

But a small group of people in a picturesque corner of North Devon might disagree.

People like Mickey Niblett, who is typical of those who work RM Instow, home of 11 (Amphibious Trials and Training) Squadron.

The fabricator/welder has been at Arromanches Camp for 23 years, and has a track record in sorting out such problems.

Broken engine part? Again, no problem – Mickey and colleagues like vehicle technician Steve Parkinson can between them design and fashion it in a trice, because they represent a valuable resource – practical skills allied to vast experience.

That extends to a rapid design and build of armour for raiding craft for Iraq (one bootneck later sought Mickey out and shook his hand, saying Mickey's work had saved his life in an explosion), boat-style fenders for JCBs or even marker buoys for exercises on the beaches.

"It isn't necessarily all that clever, but it is 40 years of experience," said Mickey.

As the OC 11(ATT) Sqn, Maj Mark Woosey RM, said: "My civilians are brilliant – they have fantastic knowledge, and their longevity is immense too."

"The corporate knowledge is

unlike anywhere else I have been. This place does not forget."

"Someone might suggest something, and someone else will say 'You can't do that – we tried that 15 years ago and it didn't work then...'"

The squadron has 54 people on its staff, of which 14 are military (13 RM, one RN), each adding a unique range of experiences to the services offered by the sub-unit of Plymouth-based 1 Assault Group RM (1 AGRM).

And the pioneering outlook reflects the history of the base, created in 1942 as part of the Combined Ops Experimental Establishment (COXE).

The focus at Instow was the Allied invasion of Europe, and the area – straddling the estuaries of the Taw and Torridge – was ideal because of the variety of coastline in a small area.

And it is this variety ("every type of coast we use as Royal Marines is represented around here except ice, coral and mangrove swamp," said Maj Woosey) and the sheltered waters that makes Instow an ideal base for specialised training.

There are several strands to the work carried out by 11(ATT), grouped around equipment trials and training staff on how to maintain and operate the vehicles upon which the success of an amphibious landing depends.

Most of those strands use the



'dip tank' to prove that vehicles and drivers can handle the crucial period between disembarkation from a landing craft and reaching dry land – "we make sure that vehicles can cross the water gap," said Maj Woosey.

A typical project would see a military vehicle brought in for waterproofing assessment, allowing it to operate through deep water (a watertight vehicle would float, rendering it difficult or impossible to move or steer).

Projects Officer Paul Sherratt said: "If a vehicle is needed to enter service with the Royal Marines it comes down here for formal acceptance trials."

Paul explained that such a project could involve creating prototypes for kits to attach to the vehicle, working either with the base's own workforce or in concert with industry – the squadron has a proud record in finding answers that can be used beyond the military sphere, acting as a trials facility for manufacturers.

"Our JCBs are in the water longer than just about anyone else's, so we can provide useful tips to the manufacturer," said Maj Woosey.

A fording depth of 1.5m (almost 5ft) is the NATO-recognised starting point, which a waterproofed Land-Rover will cruise through with relative ease.

By designing a waterproofing kit, the squadron can upgrade a 'weatherised' vehicle – instead of having to apply grease and fit special parts before each dunking, most of the waterproofing is built in, saving time.

There are beneficial spin-offs, too, such as the draught marks – Plimsoll lines for vehicles – which are being added to the Viking fleet, ensuring it is trimmed when 'swimming'.

And it is not just vehicles – they have waterproofed a Bowman radio compartment on a vehicle, and a 105mm gun.

The squadron's Training Wing trains maintainers in the art of waterproofing and maintenance of deep-fording kit, and also hosts associated elements of Defence driving courses.

"We teach people how to use the equipment," said Maj Woosey.

"We train them in the dip tank, dry then wet, then on a sheltered beach by day, then by night, finally on to a beach with surf – progressive training."

"My team are experts. We do it safely and progressively, teaching them to waterproof them and drive them off."

The camp's main building is part workshop, part training area, and there is a teaching block, galley and a 60-berth accommodation unit for students.

As well as the waterproofing, Instow also runs courses in the operation and care of plant, aimed at the RM Assault Squadron ABU (amphibious beach unit) fleet, which would normally deploy from the assault ships HMS Albion and Bulwark.

This might be JCBs, military tractors or specialised track-laying equipment, all designed to prepare the beach for offload from the ship and to keep it open under attack.

The third set of courses – eight weeks long – revolves around the considerable bulk of the Hippo Beach Recovery Vehicle (BRV).

This 50-tonne behemoth will recover any vehicle the Corps owns, and can push a 240-tonne landing craft off a beach or straighten it in a tricky surf.

It can operate in water almost 3m (10ft) deep and, as only four of them were built (one

each for the assault ships, one spare and one with 11ATT for training) the Instow team are the acknowledged experts on their operation and maintenance, as well as producing bespoke replacements for broken parts.

"They are based on a Leopard tank, and they are an amazing piece of kit. We love them," said Maj Woosey.

The squadron also supports the work of 10 Training Squadron, based at RM Tamar in Plymouth, which generates the coxswains and crews for landing craft and raiding craft.

That support ranges from providing vehicles and staff to practise beach assaults to adding their local knowledge of tides, shorelines and conditions to those running landing craft navigation and seamanship exercises.

Tidal factors and the intensity of the course mean that training is undertaken round the clock – "you could see someone pushing a broom around the hangar floor, but at 2am he could be manning the BRV in support of these courses," said Maj Woosey.

The Bosun in Command at Zeta Berth, a mile up the Torridge, is Peter Moore, who served in the Falklands Conflict as a Royal Marine and is now cox'n for all trials craft.

Peter, a former junior bugler who retrained as a commando, rising to Warrant Officer, brings a wealth of experience, which is particularly exploited in support of 10 Training Sqn and the activities of 11ATT's Craft Trials Wing.

The squadron is also the Navy's specialists in small craft trials – "the Navy Command HQ authority for all surface manoeuvre research, development, trials and acceptance..."

From the two-berth pontoon,



● One of 11ATT's plant vehicles proves its seaworthiness



● Instow's Beach Recovery Vehicle emerges from the dip tank



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Seamless transfer from Regular to Reserve

Meet Brian, who chose to use the Seamless Transfer Scheme as he quickly recognised that the Royal Navy Reserve (RNR) are a professional team and a key part of the Whole Force Concept.

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● Members of the Royal Family, from left to right, the Duke of Kent, Duke of Gloucester, Countess of Wessex, Earl of Wessex, Duke of York, Prince Harry, the Duchess of Cambridge and Duke of Cambridge, outside St Paul's Cathedral for the flypast and parade, below right, following the service of commemoration
Pictures: POA(Phot) Owen Cooban

Thanking veterans for Afghan service

THE Royal Family led the nation in a service of commemoration to mark 13 years of UK military operations in Afghanistan.

The service at St Paul's Cathedral honoured the 453 Servicemen and women who lost their lives during the campaign and recognised the contribution of the Armed Forces, charities, aid organisations and all those in the UK who worked to make Afghanistan a safer and more stable country.

Among the guests were the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh, members of the Armed Forces, veterans, the next of kin of deceased personnel, representatives of military and aid charities and organisations, and the UK's NATO allies.

More than 100 Royal Navy personnel and 146 Royal Marines also took part.

The service was followed by a parade at which the Prince of Wales took the salute as personnel from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, the Army, the Royal Air Force and veterans, supported by military bands and pipes and drums, marched from the cathedral to Guildhall in the City of London.

Aircraft used in the campaign including Chinook, Apache

and Sea King helicopters, and Hercules transporters and Tornado jets flew over the cathedral and parade in tribute.

At the same time military establishments throughout the UK and Germany held events for personnel and families to mark the day in their own way.

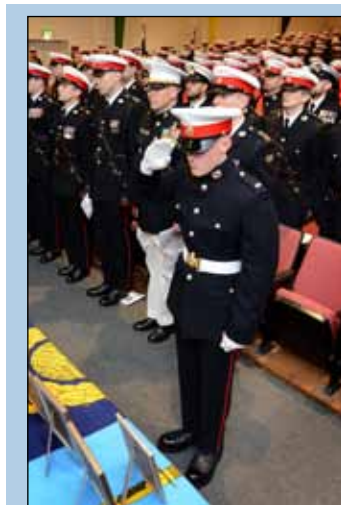
In excess of 5,000 Royal Navy and Royal Marines, including reservists, served in Afghanistan.

Lt Kevin Regan, 35, served in Afghanistan in 2011 as a senior rate and Commando Aircrewman with 846 NAS. He was in charge of all deployed aircrewmen and operated under Joint Helicopter Force.

"I was extremely proud to represent the Royal Navy in Afghanistan during a tour in which we certainly made a positive impact on the standard of living of the local population," he said.

"We worked very hard in Afghanistan flying many hours in a very arduous and tiring environment. However it was always done willingly and enthusiastically as we knew we were helping an oppressed and frightened people."

Reservist PO Derek Parsons, 47, was the first in his Information Operations role to deploy to Afghanistan. Working out of Lashkar Gah in 2011 Derek,



40 Commando Royal Marines held a memorial service to honour the Servicemen and women who fought and died during the Afghanistan conflict.

In particular, the service remembered the 18 Royal Marines from 40 Commando who lost their lives on tour during the 2001-2015 conflict.

The battalion-sized unit gathered, with family members of the bereaved and injured former servicemen, to pay their respects and reflect on those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Picture: LA(Phot) Will Haigh

an instructor for RNR recruits, worked for 15 UK Psychological Operations Group.

"I was very proud to stand up and do my bit for Queen and country," he said. "To be the vanguard for other reservists in my specialisation and to help the Afghan people build a safer future gives me a real sense of achievement."

Royal Marines unit Hasler Company sent seven of

its number to attend the commemoration parade, all of whom had served in Afghanistan over the past 13 years.

They included Cpl 'Spider' Webb who was selected to meet the Queen on the steps of St Paul's.

Since 2009, Hasler Naval Service Recovery Centre has had 96 people – ranking from lieutenant colonel to marine/private – assigned as a



direct result of operations in Afghanistan, with 25 of them still serving. Ultimately, all leave the Service and seek employment elsewhere – currently 96 per cent of all personnel who have left are employed.

A cross made of shell casings which adorned a memorial wall in Camp Bastion was blessed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, ahead of forming part of a new Bastion Memorial Wall at the

Royal British Legion's National Memorial Arboretum, which will be dedicated in June.

After the parade receptions were held for those who attended the service or took part in the parade at the Guildhall, hosted by the City of London Corporation, and the Honourable Artillery Company and Wellington Barracks, hosted by the Royal British Legion, and attended by members of the Royal Family.

Remembering those who didn't return

Picture: LA(Phot) Pepe Hogan



PERSONNEL from 45 Commando Group gathered in Woodlands Garden at RM Condor for their unit memorial service.

The service, led by the unit's chaplain Rev Mark Davidson, focussed on those individuals who'd served on operations in Afghanistan and members of the unit were present at both RM Condor and at St Paul's Cathedral.

Approximately 320 personnel of 45 Commando Group, which includes 7 (Sphinx) Battery Royal Artillery, have previously served in Afghanistan.

During the service Maj ECM Hall, WO2 A Leaver and Cpl Thornton, all from Zulu Company, each gave a description of 45 Commando Group's role on the three operational tours that the unit undertook.

CO Lt Col Dan Cheesman said: "Twelve brave men of 45 Commando Group sadly lost their lives whilst serving in Afghanistan, but they will forever be remembered as their names lay proudly displayed on the remembrance stone in Woodlands Garden."

■ A mounted and framed citation and replica Military Cross that belonged to Capt Alan Tate, along with a bronze miniature Commando Memorial, have been donated to 45 Commando Group.

Capt Tate received the Military Cross on 27 January 1945, whilst he was an 18-year-old Acting Lt serving as commander of E Troop, 45 Cdo. He was presented the award on his 20th Birthday by Field Marshal Montgomery.

Capt Tate led nine men of E Troop to hold a bridgehead on the River Maas near Roermond in Holland.

He died in 2012 and his widow, Mrs Miriam Tate, donated ten miniature bronze Commando Memorials to the Royal Marines, one of which was donated to 45 Commando Group.

Lt Col Cheesman said: "Captain Tate truly performed a brave and heroic act, and it is with great pleasure that the unit can accept these gifts. They will take pride of place in the Officers' Mess of 45 Commando Group."

Kings of the mountain ...



WILD goats are a common sight in the Scottish Highlands but the timid animals tend to hide when confronted by humans – particularly a troop of Royal Marines.

And so proved the case when commandos training to be Royal Marines Mountain Leaders descended on the Grampian area of the Highlands.

Part of Exercise Mountain Goat saw marines climb Ben Nevis. At 1,344m (4,409ft), the highest mountain in the British Isles proved

no major hurdle for the men.

Led by Sgt Simon Wright-Hider, the four-day training package served as a prequel for all Commando-trained ranks taking part in Exercise Hairspring in Norway.

The exercise in Kinlochleven aimed to build up physical strength and stamina, prepare the men for the demanding terrain and weather of Norway, and build confidence using specialist equipment.

Exercise Mountain Goat began at Kinlochleven Training Centre with lessons in ice axe arrests, climbing using crampons and digging snow

holes in order to find shelter from the bitter wind and snow.

Day two dawned and Ben Nevis awaited. The snow cover on the mountain allowed the marines to put into practice the skills they learned the previous day.

The 700-metre (2,300 ft) cliffs of the north face of Ben Nevis are among the highest in the United Kingdom, providing classic scrambles and rock climbs of all difficulties for climbers and mountaineers.

The cliffs are also the principal locations in the UK for ice climbing.

Royal Marines Mountain Leaders carry all the equipment they need to survive in harsh conditions, as well as their military equipment including weapons, radios and specialist stores for their unique role.

The following day – and night – saw the men complete a 25-mile yomp from the village of Kinlochleven across the Mamores mountain range before dropping down across the Grey Corries mountain range and finishing at the Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge.

■ *Marines in Norway* – pages 19-22

... and of the woodland



● A member of 42 Cdo in the woods at Pirbright

THIS, believe it or not, is deepest Surrey – and these are Royal Marines stalking their way through it.

The green berets of Juliet Company, 42 Commando, left their base in Bickleigh just outside Plymouth, to sweep through the woods and heathland scrub of the Army Training Centre in Pirbright, between Aldershot and Woking.

Precision Strike was the second of three small-scale exercises slowly laying the foundations for the men of 42 to take over as the nation's on-call commando unit in 14 months' time.

The week-long workout saw the Smiley Boys – as 42 are affectionately known – run through soldiering skills such as tactical movement, observation, stalking, and firing live ammunition, including the Javelin anti-tank missiles.

Or as Maj Andy Dow, Juliet Company's Commander put it, "the foundations and building blocks of everything we do."

He continued: "Precision Strike is the second of three exercises taking our guys from



● Royal Marines are taught how to use Javelin anti-tank missiles during Precision Strike



Pictures: LA(Phot) Maxine Davies and LA(Phot) Joel Rouse

basic weapons handling and marksmanship up to live field firing, firing all the weapons in the company to a good standard."

L/Cpl Frans Navarro added: "It's been a fantastic opportunity to further develop our core skills after being deployed on a variety

of tasks, including support to the Ebola crisis in West Africa."

The three units of 3 Commando Brigade, each over 600 men and women strong, take it in turns to be the 'lead commando group' – the formation the government can

activate in the event of a crisis and deploy them around the world – for 12 months at a time.

Currently 40 Cdo, based at Norton Manor outside Taunton, are on call, although in May they will hand over to the green berets of 45 Cdo from Arbroath.



Project FIREFLY Daily transferring from Regular to Reserve

This is Jenni. She joined the Reserves through the Seamless Transfer Scheme and is now reaping the excellent rewards offered, which are in addition to her civilian employment package. All for a minimum commitment of just 24 days

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Firefighting role for reservists



MEDIA Operations reservists donned firefighting gear to learn how to free victims trapped in a car crash.

A training weekend at RNAS Yeovilton also saw the team learn how to battle raging fires and enter smoke-filled rooms to tackle a blaze.

During the weekend the reservists heard from the Fleet Air Arm's Assistant Chief of Staff Capt Alun Jones.

He spoke about the ongoing deployment and training of both RN engineers and aircrew with the US Navy carriers, flying and operating

alongside our allies to grow RN knowledge of operating from the new carriers.

Lt Cdr Mark Hankey, Head of the RNR's Media Operations Reserve Specialisation, said: "The Media Operations Specialisation is often called upon to represent all aspects of the Service to the media; it is for this reason that we keep ourselves current with key developments.

"Our visit to RNAS Yeovilton allowed us to catch up with the latest developments as well as with each other too, sharing best practice."

Forecast looks good

A ROYAL Naval Reservist from Barnstaple in Devon is helping shape the nation's weather forecast in his day job as well as with the RNR Air Branch at RNAS Culdrose.

LH James Bulpett, who in civilian life works for the Met Office at Exeter, joined the UK's national weather service after serving six years in the Royal Navy where he was a Leading Airman in the Met Branch.

During his Naval service he helped the Fleet Air Arm's weather forecasters at sea on some of the Royal Navy's largest ships and on land at Culdrose.

His role was to help predict the weather and produce forecasts for aviation and Naval operations, gathering information and observing weather phenomena.

Working now at the Met Office HQ in Exeter, James's job in the civilian environment has a direct crossover with his reservist role at Culdrose. On his days in uniform he carries out weather observations and



● LH James Bulpett

inputs the information into the same collection system that he would normally monitor from his Exeter office.

"My Reservist role with the Air Branch really complements my day job," said James. "It's very much hands on here at Culdrose, whereas what I do at Exeter is more in the background.

"I left the Navy to spend more time with my family and the Air Branch/Met Office combination certainly works for me."

Accolade for story hunter

A ROYAL Navy Reservist has been awarded the Communicator of the Year Award 2014 by the Guild of Public Relations Practitioners.

Lt Cdr Heather Lane received the award from First

Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas.

Lt Cdr Lane is the PRO for HMS King Alfred in Portsmouth and has also worked hard to achieve improved recruiting publicity.



● CPO Andy Harding carries out an inspection at RNAS Culdrose

Pictures: POA(Phot) Paul A'Barrow

Veterans complete final Sea King MOT

TWO men from the Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch at RNAS Culdrose carried out the very last "Flying-MOT" of a Sea King Mk5 before the aircraft is retired from service next year.

The veteran air engineers CPOs Bruce Rowarth and Andy Harding, who have served most of their Naval careers with the venerable Sea King, carry out what is called "Zonal Surveys" on all the 771 Search and Rescue Naval Air Squadron's aircraft.

Each aircraft is surveyed at 15-month intervals and they spend between 15 and 18 days on them.

The surveys are designed to assess what parts of the aircraft need attention to maintain its airworthiness.

"We come in on weekends to the squadron and once the aircraft are stripped back, we get to work," said Bruce.

"I've been doing this job now for about 14 years and have seen many of the Sea Kings, several times! It was designed in the



● Veteran air engineer CPO Bruce Rowarth

1950s with little consideration for the maintainers to change components and I have the scars on my hands to prove it."

The surveys carried out on Naval aircraft are normally done by members of a squadron, and it's important that the surveyors get into all the nooks and crannies, looking for cracks, corrosion, chaffed pipelines,

rust, dust and ensure all the zones of the aircraft are fit for purpose and function correctly. During the survey, any defects are documented to form a rectification package for the squadrons Maintenance Unit (MU) to complete.

Bruce and Andy's contribution to the squadron is immeasurable and as Maritime Reserves their

knowledge on the search-and-rescue Sea Kings is second to none at RNAS Culdrose.

"It's important that we are independent from the day-to-day business on 771," said Andy.

"We certainly feel part of the squadron and it's a good use of the Air Branch Reserve engineers, it works fantastically well.

"If a squadron senior rate was to do this job he could be swayed by all the pressures to get aircraft up and onto the flying programme. What we offer is unique and works well for everyone."

771 NAS Senior Maintenance Rating (SMR), WO1 Ian Mitchell is impressed by the way they just get on and complete the surveys.

"They're always on call and always available whenever we need them," he said.

"It's through their hard work that the aircraft are prepared ready to pass their Zonal packages. I think it's a very special moment for them and us, as we line-up this final MOT for one of our Sea Kings."



Project FIREFLY

The journey does not have to end!

This is Lee, who joined the RNR through the Seamless Transfer Scheme to retain his association with the Navy and its unique camaraderie. He gets great rewards and the peace of mind that he will not be routinely mobilised for two years.

Get the best of both worlds, come and join him and the other regulars who have transferred.



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Pictures: POA(Phot) Mez Merrill

WHITE HOT

Hundreds of Royal Marines decamp to Norway for annual Arctic training

GUSTING winds. Blowing snow. Temperatures down to -28°C. The occasional bright blue sky.

Men armed with guns. Climbing in and out of helicopters and riding skidoos. It can only mean one thing.

The Royal Marines are back in Norway.

And this year they proved a real force – with Mountain Leaders training in the far north, the annual Clockwork deployment at Bardufoss and Royal Marines taking part in their cold-weather Exercise Aquila.

The winter wastelands of Porsangermoen at the tip of Norway is 230 miles inside the Arctic Circle and is said to be the best military classroom in Europe.

The students ‘enjoying’ the harsh landscape 150 miles east of Tromsø are on the Royal Marines Mountain Leader course.

The latest phase of the arduous nine-month course, which has seen them conduct climbing instruction in Cornwall and mountain movements in Wales and Scotland, involves role-specific Arctic training.

Further south at Bardufoss, Joint Helicopter Command held its annual Clockwork deployment – with their green Merlin Mk3s making their Norway debut for the Commando Helicopter Force.

Joining the Merlins were

RAF Puma Mk2s and the Army Air Corps Lynx Mk7s, with the latter making their final deployment.

During Clockwork aircrews picked up Royal Marines from 43 Commando during the final stages of Aquila 15.

Lt Cdr Alex Hampson from 846 NAS said: “Supporting Royal Marines on the ground is exactly what we are here for and the ability to train in extreme Arctic conditions and then put those skills into practice increases the training value for us and the troops alike.

“If we can fly and operate in support of ‘Royal’ in the Arctic, we can do it anywhere.”

During their time in Bardufoss, aircrew made a delivery of logs – a lot of logs; six tonnes in fact. To a log cabin, pictured bottom left.

Crew took a CHF Merlin Mk3 and an AAC Lynx Mk 7 67km into the mountains to the property at Lappjordhytta owned by the Norwegian Trekking Association.

The logs were collected from Overas, south of Bardufoss and carried further south to the area where the under-slung loads were dropped into deep snow.

Warden Bernhard Eilertsen said: “It would take snowmobiles seven days to supply the remote location so the offer of help by helicopter is always a labour-saving

welcome.”

During the resupply a woman came to the door and peered through the snow kicked up by the arrival of the Merlin.

“Clockwork,” she yelled, giving a thumbs-up to the crew before handing over welcome cups of coffee.

Maj Jon Parry, second in command at 846 NAS, added: “CHF have been deploying to this area for over 40 years and the opportunity for us to contribute something back to our Norwegian hosts is very satisfying.

“We hope to be invited back for many years to come as the training value gained here aligns very well with our primary customers at home, 3 Cdo Bde, who have been deployed in the area this winter.”

Back to the north of Norway, where the Mountain Leader course deployed for novice ski survival and cold weather warfare courses, along with testing tactical exercises culminating in Exercise Norge Finale.

The finale tests the students’ new-found skills as they cross the barren and mountainous Finnmark region on skis and snowshoes, carrying full kit and covering distances of up to 100km a day. It’s akin to extreme hiking. Very extreme.

It also involves climbing. Up the sheer face of frozen

waterfalls.

Former Mountain Leader chief instructor C/Sgt ‘Bill’ Billingsley, said: “Whilst the skills that are taught on the course have changed and adapted, such as the introduction of urban climbing, the core elements of the Mountain Leader course remains the same.

“It is a great pleasure to see and help train the next generation of Mountain Leaders and watch them progress throughout the course.”

C/Sgt Billingsley, who conducted his Mountain Leader course 20 years ago this year, is now in charge of ensuring that the new course is fully equipped throughout the nine-month evolution.

Part of the role of the Mountain Leader is to help develop mountain and Arctic warfare capacity and with new skis, boots and clothing systems this has enhanced the capability of not only the Mountain Leaders but the rest of 3 Cdo Bde in the cold weather environment.

The Brigade are the custodians of mountain and cold weather warfare for UK Defence. The Mountain Leaders are responsible for training the rest of the Brigade in this unforgiving environment.

The course is long and arduous and the students are tested daily to ensure they meet the exacting standards

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All the Royal Marines course members are either corporals or captains with previous commando experience and are all volunteers to conduct the Mountain Leader course and join the specialisation.

In addition other countries such as the Royal Netherlands Marine Corps send officers to the Mountain Leader course to train alongside their British counterparts.

The weather in Porsangermoen is a testing environment in itself; deep snowdrifts are battered by the icy cold wind that swirls about as the students move across the ground towards their next task.

The students are unlikely to meet any locals as the Porsanger area is the third largest in Norway at 4,872 square kilometres – roughly the same size as Northumberland. But while the English county boasts a population of 316,000, Porsanger's is a mere 3,963.

Maj Jon Lindsay, the Officer Commanding Mountain Leader and Combat Intelligence Company, said: "Porsangermoen is an excellent training area for Mountain Leader's conducting Cold Weather Warfare due to the harsh environment.

"The Norwegians are keen to see Porsangermoen used more and it is all part of the UK Defence engagement. UK forces continue to conduct Cold Weather Warfare training and in particular Northern Norway and Finnmark.

"Norway is an incredibly demanding environment which challenges men and machine on a daily basis. It makes men and unit cohesion incredibly robust. Many cite Royal Marines success in the Falkland Islands due to previous Norway deployments."

Porsanger, which is home to three official languages,

Norwegian, Northern Sami and Kven/Finnish, has a heavy military presence thanks to the Norwegian Army garrison and the country's air force.

Maj Lindsay added: "The Mountain Leader course has significantly changed over the years as we have adapted to modern threats whilst still maintaining some of our unique skills.

"We still continue to train for surveillance and manned reconnaissance in all environments particularly in mountain and cold weather warfare."

The men of the group have set their sights on being a part of the lead element of Commando Landing Forces.

As they trudge through the freshly fallen snow red faced with heavy packs the end of the course is temptingly close.

However there are still great challenges ahead both in this gruelling environment of Norway and into their future as Mountain Leaders.

As with most courses in the Royal Marines the training is just the beginning – fulfilling the role and continuing the high standards is always the hardest part.

Joining the Royal Marines in Norway – but further south at Harstad – was TV presenter and comedian Alexander Armstrong.

The *Pointless* star travelled to meet 3 Cdo Bde ahead of a bid to travel around the Arctic Circle and was given instruction on how to survive in the harsh cold weather.

The Marines gave lessons on how to catch, cook and eat food in a survival situation, how to build a survival shelter and how to start a fire from scratch.

Alexander said: "It has been extremely instructive. We had to pay attention and learn because this is a real situation that we could potentially find ourselves in.

● From top: Royal Marines during the Mountain Leaders Course and personnel taking part in Exercise Aquila 15 in Norway
Below: TV presenter Alexander Armstrong learns how to make a fire during his trip to Norway





"If you give up out here, you are going to last about an hour. That's what you have to remember, you have to strive in this environment otherwise it's all curtains."

The annual exercise Aquila 15 has seen Marines from M Company, 42 Cdo, based at Bickley, Whisky Company, 45 Cdo, from Arbroath in Scotland, and colleagues from the Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron and 30 Cdo, based at Stonehouse Barracks, all part of 3 Cdo Bde, spend much of the early part of the year outside with temperatures as low as -10°C and winds of up to 120mph.

Maj Ian McGill of 30 Cdo, who is in charge of the Marines' training in Norway, described the conditions as 'ideal'.

"We have seen quite changeable conditions out here this year, with temperatures occasionally creeping above zero," he said.

"That is when it is most difficult because clothing and equipment starts to get wet and then it can freeze when the temperature falls again."

For the exercise the Royal Marines are being taught how to survive, move around on skis and also fight in the difficult conditions.

They must ski across the mountains while carrying weapons and 70lb Bergens, construct makeshift shelters from brushwood, and build fires to keep warm and cook their dinner.

Food is usually chicken, which they must kill themselves, and vegetables, which they are taught how to prepare with only basic equipment.

As well as trying to master balancing on skis with their weapons and bags, while also looking out for the enemy, all must go through an ice-breaking ritual.

This involves each person skiing into an ice hole carrying two poles and a rucksack and then pulling themselves out with all their equipment. Once out of the ice hole the individual has to recite their Service number and name before asking for permission to leave the ice where they then get into warm dry clothes and have a hot drink.

The aim of the challenge is for each person to experience what it would be like if any of them fell through ice during Arctic warfare.

Maj Steve Cox, who is in charge of the deployment overall, said: "This is one of the most challenging environments in the world and the Royal Marines have been coming here since the 1950s."

"If you can operate here, you can operate anywhere and we proved this when we used skills learned in Norway in the freezing mountains of Afghanistan in 2002."

Back to Bardufoss and Clockwork, where aircrew conduct helicopter landings in deep snow producing a 'whiteout' effect, which is similar to the 'brownouts' of desert landings.

Deploying to Norway, the aircrew experience the incredibly cold temperatures associated with operating 200km inside the Arctic Circle. A helicopter preparing for a field landing at about 70mph with an outside air temperature of -25°C means the air crewman will experience a wind chill of about -70°C.

They also have to deal with the recirculation produced by the rotor downdraft, depending on how much snow has fallen. This can often be severe so the aircrewman's commentary, as he guides the pilot into a landing site as it allows him or

her to anticipate losing all his hover references immediately prior to landing.

The training then moves to the next phase, up into the mountains to operate the aircraft at a much higher altitude and in stronger winds. Here, the crews are presented with some significant performance limitations to work with to enable them to land on a ridge or in a valley.

Operating in the mountains can be an uncomfortable and intimidating feeling initially.

It takes the eye time to adjust to the scale of the mountains, becoming accustomed to closure rates and, for the aircrewman, vertigo can sometimes be experienced on approach to the mountaintops with the ground being thousands of feet below the aircraft until the very final stages of landing.

Also included during this training is low-level navigation, load lifting by day and night, and formation sorties that include field landing sites.

With temperatures below -30°C, handling the aircraft can be difficult even on the ground. Pilots have to work hard to complete the simple task of taxiing the 30-tonne helicopter without skidding on the sheer black ice that forms on the flight line.

Clockwork's CO Maj Parry said: "Clockwork has been going for more than 40 years, and is a well known and established brand. Certainly in the local area everyone knows Clockwork."

"They know the Brits come here and they know we train here and know why we train here, and because of that we enjoy a very good relationship with them."

For engineers new to operating in this environment, it can be slightly overwhelming at first as everything takes

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longer; just dressing to travel to the flight line is an evolution in itself, combine this with removal of aircraft protective covers, pre-warming the aircraft if necessary, positioning power rigs, and stowing of equipment, a simple line flyer (routine tasking aircraft) may take as long as 45 minutes to prepare.

The basics, like wearing gloves when working on aircraft, so your hands do not stick to the freezing metal causing 'freezer burns', is a huge challenge. Carrying out aircraft maintenance is made all the more demanding in these severe temperatures, especially when wind chill is factored in.

All personnel deploying to Norway must first pass the Cold Weather Survival Course which consists of classroom-based lectures on the environment and survival techniques followed by outdoor training, initiated with a snowshoe 'yomp' up Radar Hill, where students spend nights in a ten-man tent, a four-man tent and a 'Quincy shelter', essentially an igloo.

The course ends with the ice-breaking drills.

By the end of the Cold Weather Survival Courses, 297 JHC personnel were trained to operate in the Arctic, with 56 qualifying as Arctic drivers.

Behind the scenes, support personnel are the lynchpin for the delivery of the Arctic training, supporting over 200 personnel from the RN, Army and RAF.

Over the five-month period that Clockwork runs, the galley uses an average of eight tonnes of potatoes, providing three meals a day (four during night-flying training) with just

nine chefs and four stewards.

On the equipment side, over 40 vehicles, 20,000 tonnes of support equipment and eight aircraft are brought out to Norway.

This year saw the RAF Puma flying 272 hours over 134 sorties with seven crews, the RN Merlin 386 hours over 234 sorties with eight crews and the Army Lynx 200 hours over 200 sorties with five crew.

With the snow barely melted from the Merlins, 846 NAS will next redeploy to RNAS Yeovilton.

Lt Col Derek Stafford, CO 846 NAS, said: "The amount of change the squadron has gone through over the last year in terms of standing up in September 2014, doing desert training in Jordan, Christmas leave, coming out to the Arctic and then having two weeks to pick up the squadron and move it down to Yeovilton has been a huge challenge.

"It's been busy, and ultimately with a new aircraft type it's great to shake out as a squadron in the desert and Arctic before we move to Yeovilton with the creditability of two detachments behind us."

This year's Clockwork was the final deployment of the Lynx Mk7 after serving both the AAC and CHF for 30 years.

For Maj Hannah Hayward, OC 659 Sqn AAC, the departure of the Lynx Mk7 will be an especially sad occasion.

"I have always flown the Lynx so I have a personal attachment to it. It is a fantastic aircraft to fly in terms of its manoeuvrability.

"The Mk7 has proven itself over and over in the past and is a really reliable, good, fun aircraft to fly. It's going to be incredibly sad to see it go.

"The history of the Lynx and

everything it's achieved in the 40 years it has been in service is remarkable – it's been fantastic to fly this aircraft. It has been a great honour to be both the OC of 659 Sqn and take part in the last ever deployment."

659 Squadron is currently located at Dishforth in North Yorkshire, within 9 Regiment Army Air Corps and operates the Light Utility Helicopter Lynx Mk7, in support of 16 Air Assault Brigade.

Over the next 18 months, 9 Regt will begin its relocation to RNAS Yeovilton and merge with 1 Regt AAC where they will transition onto the new AugustaWestland Wildcat BRH helicopter. 9 Regt will continue flying the Lynx Mk9 until the end of 2016 to fulfil its ongoing commitments.

846 NAS and CHF have only been formally operating the Merlin since October 2014 and in that time have deployed to both Jordan and Norway for environmental training.

Lt Cdr Hampson said: "This is the first time that a CHF Squadron has operated Merlin in the Arctic and whilst the learning curve has been steep, the capability that this aircraft brings to the force is now being realised."

As well as being a great place to train, Norway itself is strategically important to the UK as it provides 37 per cent of our energy imports and is a NATO ally. It also gives the Royal Marines the chance to train with their Dutch and Norwegian counterparts.

Next year will see the Royal Marines return to Norway in even greater numbers to test the skills they have learned this year in a full tactical exercise.



Made in the Navy

MEET my granddaughter Alexa, who was born last December.

Her parents are both AB(Seaman Specialists).

Mum Elayna Wyatt formerly served in HMS Dragon and is now at HMS Drake (HMNB Devonport) in Plymouth.

Alexa's dad is Callum Fennel, based on the Type 23 frigate HMS Iron Duke.

The couple, who have been together for four years, met on their first ship, the Type 45 destroyer HMS Daring.

Joe Jordan
Plymouth



Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tipple to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is Joe Jordan



Quest for eleven

CAPTAIN James Jeffrey Edward Farnol DSC RN was the captain of HMS Morecambe Bay during the Korean War in 1952.

The photograph shows 11 seamen and stokers who volunteered to join up with the British 29th Brigade and fight alongside them on the front line with the intent of shortening the war.

Known as Farnols Foot they were there for six months before rejoining the ship in Hong Kong.

All survived their experience. If any of them are still with us Doug would love to hear from them.

Doug Turk
Ex L/Tel HMS
Morecambe Bay
Hampshire



● The seamen and stokers who fought alongside British soldiers

Avoided Ganges by days

IN a letter from Mr Kenneth Cast in February's edition of *Navy News*, he mentioned RN boys of 14 or 15 years old joining up at Ganges or St Vincent.

Raleigh also accepted 15-year-olds for basic training – I was one of them.

I joined up as a Junior Assistant Writer 2nd Class at HMS Raleigh on September 11 1967, some 81 days short of my 16th birthday.

I believe the rule back then was that any lad younger than 15 and 3/4s went to HMS Ganges for one year of basic training.

I completed my six weeks at Raleigh and 13 weeks of writer's training at HMS Pembroke.

My first draft was to Neptune in February 1968. I was put to work at the age of 16 in the base pay office on the Submarine Spare Crew section, looking after 300 pay accounts, under the watchful eye of a Leading Writer.

All of us ex-boys always thought it was unfair throughout our Service that our 'boys' time' did not count towards our pension.

I've now been receiving my RN pension for 23 years so all is forgiven, but I'm still glad that I avoided a year at Ganges.

Mick (Spider) Kelly
Minnesota, USA

Appeal for war poetry

I AM appealing to readers of *Navy News* to send me any war poems they may have or are currently writing.

My aim is to collect poetry and collate it into the different wars to which the poems refer.

Obviously all work received belongs to the author and any poems sent to me should be titled and the writer's name added.

I intend to name the collected works *Poems for Heroes* and all proceeds will go to the Royal Hospital at Chelsea.

Please send your poems to johnmontgomery57@yahoo.co.uk

John Montgomery
Cornwall

Lack of practice no problem for crew

THE photo of the cutter in December's *Navy News* prompts me to forward the following.

In the last summer season of HMS Ganges, the home of many cutters, it was decided to organise a reintroduction and final cutters pulling and sailing regatta.

This was also to include single-handed sailing and the 'crash cutter' race, which comprised of alternately sailing and pulling, changing at the sound of a whistle or horn. Does anyone remember it?

My photo shows the wardroom crew who won the race, despite only completing about three brief lunchtime training sessions. "That's enough, the bar is open," was the cry.

The demise of those skillfully-built craft was rather sad, they were disposed of and some, including a vintage 30-year-old cutter, were burned on the beach.

Doug Barlow
Waterfront boss 1970-71
Hampshire



● HMS Ganges' wardroom crew won the cutter race

Barracudas didn't curry favours in Madras

YOU published a letter from me in October 2014 regarding the restoration of the wreckage of a Fairey Barracuda and my intention, as a former Bootneck and resident of Stockport – the site of Fairey's factory – to put together a collection of memories from anyone connected with the aircraft.

I have to report that I have had four people reply. My local paper wrote about

The Fleet Air Lines and the attack on the German battleship Tirpitz, prompting an elderly woman to tell me how she remembered repairing damaged Swordfish planes during the war.

A former Barracuda driver wrote asking where he could get a model of the aircraft. Thanks to the records department at the Fleet Air Arm Museum I have one memory that always makes me smile.

At one point during WW2 there were reports of an imminent Japanese attack on the Indian city of Madras and four Barracuda squadrons were sent as a defence force.

They were unloaded from the transport on schedule but then the Curse of the Crabs struck.

The RAF were supposed to send tractors to tow the aircraft to their base

but failed to show up.

After several frustrating hours the commanding officer of the Barracudas ran out of patience and ordered all four squadrons to start their engines. The whole group, wings folded, taxied in line through the streets and on to an airfield.

Ken Brotherhood
Manchester & Salford branch, RMA
Stockport



Aye player, great photo

THE picture on the cover of February's *Navy News* strikingly reminded me of the old advert for the cigarettes *Players*.

A really excellent photo of a young Royal Naval rating.

A brilliant photo for advertising life in the Royal Navy.

John Clarke
(exCCEA)
Derby



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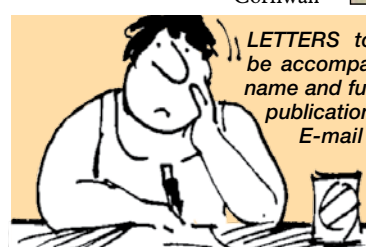
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E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it. Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in *Navy News*, nor can we reply to every one.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues. The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.

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Preparing for a busy summer

THE arrival of spring marks an exciting period of time for the fundraising team.

Not only do we get to see the culmination of our Road to Twickenham campaign at the Army vs Navy game on May 9, but we also start to prepare for a busy programme of fundraising events.

The charity will make an appearance at a number of open days, families' days, air shows and other public and community activities.

At our stand we usually run a range of fun activities for the young and the young-at-heart and share information on the charity and how we can help.

If you see us out and about please stop by and say 'hello!'

Equally, if you have an event taking place and are able to support the charity – perhaps by having bucket collectors or taking donations – please get in touch.

We'll be able to give you all sorts of advice and support and can even supply you with materials, including collection pots and buckets.

There are countless ways you can get involved – recently we've seen a number of baking competitions and cake sales, concerts and performances all held in aid of the charity.

For some tips and ideas you can download our fundraising guide at bit.ly/RNRMCFunkit

Alternatively you can give me a call on 023 9254 8289.

We look forward to bringing you even more stories throughout the summer, highlighting the difference you (and your donations) make.

You can read about this in future editions of Navy News, or follow us on Facebook.

Hilary Jukes

Regional Fundraising
Co-ordinator
The Royal Navy and
Royal Marines Charity



● Babcock Devonport's Road to Twickenham runners

Twickers beckons

THERE is still time to join our Road to Twickenham fundraising campaign ahead of the Army vs Navy match.

For the uninitiated, the campaign challenges individuals, family, friends, colleagues and Service personnel, to beat us in a race from their equivalent workplace distance to the iconic Twickenham Stadium.

Leading the charge is Babcock Devonport, who have elected to run to the stadium from their home base on the day before the game, May 8.

The 13-strong team are by far the biggest contributors to our campaign, having raised 10 per cent of our overall £15,000 target before they've even left Plymouth Naval Base.

We've heard they are aiming to achieve five figures by the time they reach Twickers.

Hot on their heels, however, a slew of new sign-ups, which include HMS President reservists Carl and Ben, who plan to walk 68 miles in under 24 hours whilst carrying everything they need for the challenge; a 220-mile

rowing attempt by HMS Nelson organised by LPT Bricknell; and an ambitious 500-mile, five-day cycle pledged by Cdr O'Toole RN from HMS Excellent.

HMS Richmond, meanwhile, has pledged to carry out the challenge by running, cycling and rowing the distance over the course of their current deployment.

We are also entering our own charity team into a 70-mile

rowing, cycling and step-machine challenge, taking place at NCHQ later this month.

Businesses and membership associations are also pledging their support, such as Market Drayton RNA, which is raising funds through a sponsored walk.

Even the employees of the North Sea Shearwater Platform rig are getting on board with the challenge.

Boost to family life

SERVICE children, veterans and families are among the biggest winners in the latest round of charity funding, allocated by a Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity grants committee.

Some £92,426 is to be shared between various good causes.

RM Poole is to receive the lion's share, getting £50,000 to furnish a new Families and Veterans Centre; a project made possible following the receipt of LIBOR funding.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity will provide the extra funding needed to create a quality space for families and veterans to socialise in, or receive guidance on welfare issues. It is hoped the project will be completed this September.

Ilchester Community Primary School, less than two miles from RNAS Yeovilton and attended by 154 Service children, is to receive a £15,000 contribution towards building a multi-use games area.

Of the pioneering project headteacher Nick Heath said: "This facility will improve access to sport and recreation for local and forces children through taught PE sessions and after school."

"Crucially, it will also provide a shared facility where parents and families from across our wider school community can participate in sporting activity together."

It is hoped that the project, which has been made possible, largely thanks to an Armed Forces Community Covenant grant, will also be used by Service personnel in the near future.

Other projects funded include an update to HMS Trenchant's Command Briefing and Mess Entertainment systems; personnel from HMS Sultan to embark on a battlefield tour; the RN Gliding and Soaring

Regional Co-ordinator Hilary Jukes said: "It's great to see such a diverse range of people and businesses taking up our Road to Twickenham challenge this year."

"It is such a simple idea – anyone can do it – and best of all, there's still time to sign up!"

Register your challenge, donate, or check out our fundraising total at bit.ly/RTT15

Association to receive new compliant radio kit; and HMS Neptune will buy new caravans at Aultbea, available for Service families to rent.

Spencer nominated

A 26-YEAR-OLD Royal Marine and gold medalist at last year's Invictus Games has been nominated in the 'People's Choice' category at the Soldiering On Through Life Trust Awards, having dedicated his time to helping others with similar disabilities following a life-changing accident.

Royal Marine Spencer Vaughn was left paralysed from the chest down while on a manoeuvre with 45 Cdo in January 2010.

An impact injury broke his neck in three places and he stopped breathing, but he was resuscitated by colleagues before being taken to hospital where he underwent an operation to fit metal plates to support his damaged vertebrae.

With Spencer's recovery having progressed at an astonishing rate, and his later contributions to helping others with physical limitations in the local community, Spencer was jointly put forward by Maj Scott Mills, CO at Hasler Coy and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

News in brief

GOOD luck to all our London Marathon runners on April 26.

We have two very special entrants this year, having secured a free place from the charity.

PTI Anthony 'Scouse' Carley and fellow PTI Ian Robinson will run the race in full rig carrying 26.2lbs in their bergens.

A BLACK-TIE Royal Marines vs Devon County charity boxing dinner takes place at RM Tamar, HMNB Devonport, at 6pm on Thursday April 23.

Tables of 10 are available from £300.

Serving personnel and MOD civilians are welcome. Contact Lt Paul J Phillips RN on 07717 714 382.

A NEW photography project to highlight the contributions of ex-serving personnel is being backed by the charity.

The 'Veterans Portrait Project UK' sees professional photographers capture veterans' portraits and stories to ensure they're always remembered.

If you're a veteran and would like to take part visit www.veteransportraitproject.uk

The Navy Curry Quest – to find an original curry sauce recipe that the Royal Navy used 150-plus years ago and sell it in aid of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity – has begun online.

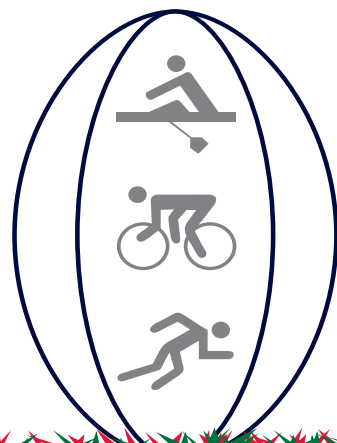
See www.facebook.com/NavyCurry for more details of the culinary quest.



"Spencer has managed to steer his life in a completely new and positive direction," said Maj Mills. "Having re-sat his GCSEs, he has now started at Cardiff University to study for a degree in Sports Biomedicine and Nutrition."

The Soldiering On Through Life Trust celebrates people within the Armed Forces community that go the extra mile to support others with their inspiring and selfless contributions.

The awards ceremony is on April 18 at Park Plaza Hotel, Westminster Bridge.



the road to
TWICKENHAM

**GO THE
DISTANCE!
MAKE
EVERY
MILE
COUNT!**

You can help us wherever you are in the world by taking part in a run, row, swim or cycle.

Your challenge is to cover the number of miles you are from Twickenham before the Army v Navy rugby game. For example, if you are based in Portsmouth, you could row 80 miles. If you are based in Lympstone you could cycle 180 miles. You could do this individually or as part of a team, with your starting point being your unit, ship's current location or your affiliated town. Raising sponsorship will help your charity care for you, your family and oppos.

Register now and measure up to the challenge!
Search 'Road to Twickenham' on the Virgin Money Giving website or contact:
fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk T: 023 9254 8289

Registered charity in England and Wales (1117794) and Scotland (SC041898).

rnrmc.org.uk/events/roadtotwickenham



FUNDRAISERS OF THE MONTH COMUKMCMFOR'S EVEREST CHALLENGE



ON March 7 the COMUKMCMFOR team set about scaling the world's highest peak above sea level, Mount Everest – 29,029ft – by repeatedly climbing the stairs of RFA Cardigan Bay. The determined team climbed nine decks some 24 times, in sets of three ascents and descents, finally realising the summit of Everest in a time of 10h 41m 32s. Amazing effort! The team are pictured above mustering at the summit on 4 Deck on completion of the challenge.

Superhero Jonathon

FORMER Royal Marine Jonathon Scott plans to do the 10K Superhero Run next month, despite undergoing palliative chemotherapy for cancer.

Jonathon suffers a lot of discomfort – he had extensive surgery for mouth and tongue cancer, which also spread to his lung – but still tries to exercise every day, and managed to complete the London Winter 10K race, partly in a wheelchair and partly by walking, raising money for Cancer Research UK.

Now the former commando is targeting the May 17 run in Regents Park, along with friends, former colleagues and medical staff – ‘Team Jonathon’.

See www.facebook.com/teamjonathonuk?pnref=lhc for more details of fundraising – and see next month’s *Navy News* for more on Jonathon.

Ball carriers

THREE Naval personnel walked 183 miles from Twickenham to Cardiff for the Wales vs England Six Nations fixture.

CPOs Andy Gibbs and Tyrone Stock and C/Sgt Andy Crofts RM carried the match ball for the clash, raising cash for Help For Heroes.

See www.doingitforheroes.blogspot.co.uk, and to donate visit www.bmycharity.com/doingitforheroes

Prize draw

BLESMA, The Limbless Veterans has launched a grand prize draw as part of national fundraising initiative ‘Blesma Week’.

Top prizes are £1,000, £500 and £250, the closing date for the draw is June 17. Email fundraising@blesma.org or call 0208 590 1124 for more details.

Polo team pitches in

Competition of note for Soldier On!

THE Royal Navy Polo team recently conducted their pre-season winter training camp in South Africa – and mid-way through the visit the ponies were given a rest as the players did some charity work.

The team crossed the border into the landlocked Kingdom of Lesotho – an enclave entirely within South Africa – to work with Sentebale, a charity founded by another British military polo player, Prince Harry.

The charity was set up in 2006 to help the most vulnerable children in Lesotho get the support they need to live healthy and productive lives.

Lesotho is a nation that suffers from extreme poverty and poor infrastructure; life expectancy is just 48 years and it has the second highest prevalence of HIV in the world.

Children invariably suffer most acutely from the effects of these problems; one in three have lost a parent, and Sentebale’s work with grass-root community organisations helping those who



● Members of the Royal Navy polo squad with children from the St Bernadette's Resource Centre in front of their new outdoor blind-football pitch in Lesotho

are most in need.

At St Bernadette’s Resource Centre for the blind, the polo team spent the day building an outdoor pitch for the children to play blind-football, where the

ball contains a bell to assist the players.

The polo team were also invited to play in the inaugural match.

Barefoot, blindfolded and

seriously outnumbered, the polo team got quite a thrashing from the excited children.

Playing blind-football did provide a tiny flavour to the Royal Navy’s polo players of what it might be like to not have full sight.

When the blindfolds came off things only seemed to get worse as the Sentebale team of about 15 rang rings round the four polo members.

Deciding to stick to polo, the team were shown around the school site, which currently caters for 63 children and gives them a vital education – but also teaches them important life and social skills.

Exploring the grounds, some of the team’s engineering skills were also put to good use in an impromptu repair of the children’s playground.

The whole visit was a humbling yet extraordinary experience for the team and one of the highlights of the whole tour.

The polo team departed to the wonderful chorus of the children singing and left having created lots of smiles.

A MILITARY charity has challenged composers to create a new piece of music to help raise the profile of the organisation.

Soldier On! is an educational charity teaching members of the UK Armed Forces, who have been made redundant on medical grounds, to plan and manage their subsequent civilian careers.

Working on the basis that military music through the ages has provided inspiration for individuals in difficult circumstances, organisers hope that the competition will also unearth new talent.

Open to all military and civilian composers in the UK or at BPO addresses, the competition requires one quick march of between 3m 30s and 4m 30s reflecting the values of the charity – dignity, courage authenticity, independence, uniqueness, talent.

The winning entry will receive a prize of £800, and entrants are restricted to one composition per person.

The title of the winning entry will be *Soldier On!* The winning composer will retain copyright and collect any royalties due, however agrees to allow the charity to use the winning entry royalty-free for 12 months from the winner being announced.

In addition, subject to artistic integrity, the winning entry will be performed during a concert tour.

The closing date is May 29 – see www.soldieron.org.uk/soldier-concert-marching-band-composition-competition-call-entries/ for full details of rules, and how entries should be submitted.

Building funds Party raffle yields £625

building industry.

A group of 30 women attended the ceremony in Devonport Naval Base, the home of Hasler Coy.

They presented the cheque – raised at a gala dinner – to Major Scotty Mills, OC Hasler Naval Service Recovery Centre, and a second £1,000 donation to Jonathan Ball, Chief Executive, Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

ENGINEERS and aircrew from 845 Naval Air Squadron handed over a cheque for £625 to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children’s Fund assistant director Clare Scherer.

The Children’s Fund, set up more than 100 years ago, supports over 2,000 children a year with needs ranging from bereavement to illness and disabilities, providing specialist

equipment, respite care and an emergency grant scheme for children of RN personnel.

The money was raised through a raffle at the squadron’s Christmas party, with prizes donated by companies across the UK.

CPO ‘Larry’ Lambert said: “The party presented the ideal opportunity to raise money for the, often over looked, little members of the Royal Navy.”



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● Capt Herbert Neville-Rolfe, pictured in around 1900

Glimpse of Navy of yore

MEMBERS of Hemel Hempstead branch were treated to a glimpse of the Victorian Royal Navy, thanks to the grandson of a 19th Century officer.

David Neville-Rolfe presented a potted history of the career of his grandfather, Capt Herbert Neville-Rolfe, along with a White Ensign.

Herbert was born in 1854 and joined the Royal Navy – at HMS Britannia, moored on the River Dart – at the age of 14.

In his 34 years of service he served in vessels up to and including battleships.

He retired as a captain in 1902 – but when the Great War erupted 12 years later Herbert started to fire off requests to the Admiralty to rejoin the Senior Service.

In March 1916 his persistence paid off, and he was given command of HMY Iolaire, a yacht with a single gun on the bow.

Capt Neville-Rolfe went on to win a DSO for sinking a German U-boat, which was announced in the *London Gazette* in June 1918.

Earlier in his career, in 1879, whilst in HMS Bacchante on a commission to take Prince Edward and Prince George on an educational cruise to initiate them into Service life, Herbert was given the job of 'snottie's nurse' to Prince George, acting as his mentor in all things Naval.

Almost 40 years later, the Prince – by then King George V – presented Herbert with his DSO, and the recipient was deeply hurt that the King did not recognise him.

Herbert's son – David's father – also served in the Royal Navy in the Great War, having joined the Royal Navy in 1916 as a midshipman in HMS Inflexible.

She was an old coal-burning battlecruiser that, on one occasion – believing that a second Battle of Jutland was about to happen – used 1,800 tons of coal in 48 hours, which would have required a considerable amount of shovelwork.

Ushakov medal passed on to Arthur

MEMBERS of Haven (Haverfordwest) branch attended on an Arctic convoy veteran to present him with his Ushakov medal.

Arthur Night, aged 88, lives in a nursing home in Milford Haven, West Wales, and was unable to attend a presentation of medals in

Cardiff by the Russian Ambassador.

However, Arthur's grandson attended the presentation in the Welsh capital, and received the medal on behalf of Arthur.

The grandson also thought it appropriate that Arthur be presented with his medal by

someone of the RN fraternity and contacted shipmates at Haven to see if this was possible.

As a result, four members of the branch and the branch standard bearer met Arthur at his nursing home, and he was presented with his medal by branch chairman Lt Cdr Griggs.

Chip off the old block

IT IS the sole battle honour inscribed on their legendary insignia.

And now a little piece of Gibraltar stands in the middle of the Royal Marines' training ground in Devon.

To mark the 75th anniversary of the Corps' principal training base at nearby Lympstone – and the 350th birthday of the Royal Marines, celebrated last year – the people of Gibraltar donated a chunk of their iconic Rock.

It's thanks to the marines that the Union Jack flies over the small territory – they and Dutch troops captured the imposing natural landmark at the gateway to the Mediterranean.

There's an impressive monument to the Corps in Gibraltar's redeveloped marina complex, but retired lieutenant colonel Alastair Rogers was struck whilst walking across Woodbury Common – where hundreds of green (and budding green) berets train each year – that there was

nothing to mark the beauty spot's long association with his fellow Royals.

Gibraltar's Governor General Jim Dutton – a former Commandant General Royal Marines – was able to convince the territory's chief minister that this was a worthy project to support.

"The rock of Gibraltar is British because of that action by the Royal Marines over 300 years ago, and as it was our 350th birthday last year the Gibraltarians were keen to give us something," said Lt Col Rogers.

"From now on if you are a recruit at Lympstone, it will be part of your memories of training here – maybe as a checkpoint on night navigation exercises or if you're struggling up the hill on the endurance course.

"Hopefully it will become a focus for the retired Corps family and for their families so they can reflect on what they've achieved."

The monument overlooks what was once Dalditch Camp, used by Royal Marines to train for the D-Day landings. It stands above the camp's old rifle range and the modern-day endurance course – one of the tests would-be commandos face.

"Gibraltarians do not part with homeland lightly but we had no hesitation in giving a piece of our rock to the Royal Marines," said Gibraltar MP Neil Costa, who represented his government at the unveiling.

"It was an Anglo-Dutch fleet that captured the Rock in 1704 and so it is a very valued relationship that we have with you."

The stone features several plaques commemorating the Royal Marines' connection with the common, which were mounted by Mossfords stonemasons in South Wales.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon, CTCRM



Rowallan cadets sought Channel Dash link

THE help of *Navy News* readers is sought in trying to track down cadets and staff from the three Rowallan Courses run by the Royal Navy in 1980-81.

The image (right) shows the successful 14 cadets from Rowallan 2 passing out from HMS Raleigh in December 1980.

The Rowallan Courses aimed to develop leadership in candidates who had narrowly failed at the Admiralty Interview Board.

The cadets were sent to Raleigh for 12 weeks intensive training under a mixed RN/RM staff, where they were also taught self reliance, physical fitness and communication skills.

Those who passed went on to Dartmouth, though the failure rate was high – 24 began Rowallan 2.

Some former cadets are still



serving nearly 35 years later.

Those still missing from Rowallan 2 include Steve Taylor (rear, 2nd left), Nick Notley (3rd left), Mark Darbin (4th left), Jimmy Martin (5th left), Simon Green (far right), Rob Hill (middle rank, 3rd right), Toby Wright (2nd right).

Staff members not yet located include POPT Nick Carter (front rank, left), Lt Woods (2nd left), CPO Attenborough (2nd right).

Any information from all three courses can be forwarded to Charlie Threlfall (middle rank, left!) via email jayneandcharlie@tiscali.co.uk

Channel Dash link

MEMBERS of the current 825 Naval Air Squadron were among those gathered to remember the brave 18 men who 73 years before had attacked the German Fleet in the Channel Dash.

CO Cdr Glyn Owen and other personnel were invited by the Channel Dash Association (CDA) to lay a wreath at the memorial stone at Ramsgate Harbour, near where the aircraft held before heading out to battle.

With the commissioning of 825 NAS last October there has been an opportunity to forge new links with the CDA and the Kent Fleet Air Arm Association.

Alongside serving sailors were members of the CDA, relatives of wartime squadron members, local dignitaries and members of the community.

The action took place on February 12, 1942, when 18 men in six Fairey Swordfish torpedo bombers took off from RAF Manston and attacked capital ships Scharnhorst and Gneisenau and the cruiser Prinz Eugen.

Thirteen aviators were killed, with CO Lt Cdr Eugene Esmonde being awarded a posthumous VC; there were four DSOs and a CGM for the survivors.

Though unsuccessful, the raid is a red letter day for the Fleet Air Arm, encapsulating the bravery, skill and determination of its members.

As part of the commemoration this year three Wildcats from 825 NAS, based at RNAS Yeovilton, carried out a formation flypast in memory of the doomed aviators.

Mercury plaque unveiled

THE third blue plaque commemorating the existence of the Royal Navy Communications and Navigation School at HMS Mercury was unveiled on March 14 at the Sustainability Centre, on the site of Mercury itself.

In its 52 years of operation Mercury played a significant role in World War 2 and the many conflicts and operations during the post-war and Cold War eras.

Hundreds of thousands of personnel from the UK and many different nations, including NATO and Commonwealth countries, served or trained at Mercury, and amongst its distinguished visitors were the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, Lord Mountbatten and the Prince and Princess of Wales.

The Leydene site is now occupied by private housing developments and the Sustainability Centre, an independent learning and study centre and social enterprise charity.

Well over 100 ex-Mercurians from as far back as the 1940s attended the ceremony, which was conducted by Cdre Anthony Morrow, who was captain of HMS Mercury from 1988 to 1991.

The fourth blue plaque will be unveiled at the White Lion pub in Soberton (affectionately known by RN personnel as the 'Pinky') on May 2.

All are welcome from 1100 onwards, with the unveiling by 1/O Polly Booth WRNS at approximately midday.

Area 7 gather

MEMBERS of 7 Area mustered at the Holiday Inn, Cardiff, at the end of February for their Annual General Meeting and their first quarterly meeting.

S/M Mike Starkey, Haven branch, was confirmed as area chairman for another year.

S/M Roger Harris, Cardiff branch, was voted in as Vice Chairman, while the Hon Sec and Treasurer remained in post.

In the early evening delegates, members and guests came together to enjoy the singing of the Tenovus Choir, then dinner, followed by a speech from David Owen, as Senior Welfare Case Worker from SSAFA, and a musical interlude from Sandra.

Annual service

THE HMS Victorious Association will be holding their annual remembrance service at the National Memorial Arboretum on St George's Day – April 23 – meeting in the cafe at 1pm to be at the tree memorial by 1.30pm.

Everyone is welcome to join members to pay their respects and enjoy a tot afterwards, said association secretary S/M Stuart 'Topsey' Turner.

Affray recalled

A SMALL gathering has been arranged at the HMS Affray Memorial in Gosport to remember those who were lost on board HMS Affray in the English Channel in April 1951.

The parade will be at 10.30am for 11am on Thursday April 16 on the sea wall adjacent to the Gosport Ferry.

RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.

admin@royalnavalassoc.com

023 9272 3747

www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



Service for TCA chaplain

TON Class Association chaplain John Oliver has crossed the bar after suffering a heart attack – just weeks after his wife of 60 years died after a fall.

S/M John originally studied theology at the University of Durham, but worked in a bank in London and did National Service in the Royal Navy from 1946-49 as a writer in the sloop HMS Black Swan in the Far East.

His experiences in war-ravaged Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan helped shape his understanding of life on the mess decks.

He was ordained in 1956 and worked as a curate in London before rejoining the Senior Service as a chaplain in 1961.

His first appointment was to the 108th MS Squadron in Malta, a parish shared for more than two years with resident submarines.

Subsequent postings included HMS Figgard, Arethusa, Condor, Manadon, Fearless, Portsmouth Naval Base and Greenwich.

S/M John put in considerable sea time, explaining that the best time to visit his parishioners was during the middle watch when spirits could be low and a word of comfort, or an opportunity to chew the fat, was most welcomed.

He served as Honorary Chaplain to the Queen from 1979-83, entitling him to wear a distinctive red cassock.

He continued his civilian ministry after retiring in 1983 (when he was awarded the OBE), working in Cleveland, Sussex and Cumbria.

In 1997 S/M John accepted the Ton Class Association's invitation to become their chaplain, which was most widely seen through his 'Chaplain's Chat' in *Ton Talk* magazines.

A thanksgiving service for his life was held at St Andrew's Church in Penrith on March 10, which would have been his 87th birthday.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery tanker in our February edition (*right*) was RFA Appleleaf, which served in the Royal Australian Navy as HMAS Westralia.

The correct answers were provided by Mr O Picton, of Southsea, who wins our £50 prize.

This month's ship (*above*), was launched in Glasgow in July 1950 and served the Royal Navy around the world until the late 1960s.

The destroyer – which has a modern-day namesake – saw action at Suez, and detected the wreck of a Royal Navy battleship which was sunk by Japanese aircraft in the South China Sea.

1) What was her name during her service in the Royal Navy, and 2) what was the name she was intended to have before she was built?

We have removed her pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send

MYSTERY PICTURE 242

Name

Address

My answers: (1).....

(2).....

French medal for Normandy veteran

A VETERAN who stormed the Normandy beaches on D-Day has received the highest honour the French government can give.

Ted Turner, 89, of Waterlooville, was awarded the *Legion d'Honneur* – France's highest decoration, created by Napoleon – at a ceremony at the Royal Marines Museum in Southsea.

He is among the first D-Day veterans in the country to be given the award, and is the first from the Portsmouth area.

As an 18-year-old Royal Marine, Ted helped Canadian troops secure Juno beach on June 6 1944, having sailed across the Channel in a landing craft.

Ted received his award from Capt Francois Jean, the *Consul Honoraire* of France, on behalf of French president Francois Hollande.

Among the guests invited were former Pompey players Alan Knight and Ray Crawford, along with current Portsmouth FC chairman Iain McInnes, to reflect Ted's passion for the club.

Also on the guest list were TV presenter Pam Rhodes, who interviewed him for a special *Songs of Praise* last year to mark D-Day 70, and the vicar of St John's Church, Purbrook, the Rev Connie Sherman.

"This is a great honour that I wasn't expecting," said Ted. "I know that I'll be thinking of those who didn't make it – my friends who didn't come back from the Normandy beaches after D-Day."

"My faith has been very important to me over the years, and of course there were lots of



● Ted Turner as a Royal Marine in 1944 (left) and 71 years on



prayers said on those days around D-Day.

"God has helped me in lots of other situations too, especially when my wife Enid died five years ago.

"My friends at St John's Church mean a lot to me, and I'm glad many of them will also be there for this presentation."

The French government informed the MOD last year that it wanted to recognise the selfless acts of heroism displayed by surviving veterans of the Normandy landings and the campaign to liberate France in 1944, by awarding them the *Legion d'Honneur*.

Veterans were invited to apply for the award, and a handful of presentations have already taken place around the UK.

Ted was born and brought up in Hilsa, Portsmouth, and at 17 he decided to go to Portsmouth's

recruiting office and sign up for the RAF, but he was too young.

Instead he was taken on by the Royal Marines in January 1943, and was stationed at Eastney Barracks then Fort Gomer in Gosport.

His training included time in North Wales, Great Yarmouth and at Dartmouth, where he spent six weeks learning how to use a landing craft.

He and three colleagues then manned a craft based at Itchenor, near Chichester.

On June 4, 1944, they sailed to Lee-on-the-Solent and came alongside a Canadian troop ship, leaving for Normandy the following day.

Seven miles off the French coast, the Canadian engineers and their trailer came on board their landing craft, and Ted and his colleagues headed for Juno.

"It was very quiet – no one

spoke," said Ted. "Then when we got close to the beach, the Germans started firing and it was pretty noisy."

"I was used to it, as my dad had been in charge of the Firewatch in Portsmouth, so I'd heard air raids and gunfire anyway."

"I wasn't frightened. I was only young, so it felt a bit like an adventure to me, even at that stage."

"We landed the Canadian engineers and their equipment on the beach and then backed off, so we could see what was going on."

Ted stayed in Normandy for six weeks before he was picked up by a ship and returned to the UK.

Some of his colleagues decided to sail landing craft back across the Channel, but hit rough seas and bad weather – and 30 of them were drowned.

Ted campaigned to get a plaque placed at their former camp in Bracklesham Bay to remember their loss, which was erected on June 3 last year.

Ted then spent a night at the camp, leaving on June 4 – 70 years to the day since he left for D-Day.

Ted also served in Germany, Sri Lanka, Hong Kong and Japan after the war – he remembers sailing past Hiroshima and seeing the devastation the atomic bomb had wrought on the city.



Well, I'll eat my hat...

JIM Manning's time in Type III Hunt-class escort destroyer HMS Talybont was vividly brought to the fore when the war veteran celebrated his 90th birthday.

Pictured (*above*) is Jim cutting into his birthday cake, which consisted of a Naval rating's cap and a picture of his old ship.

Jim served in the ship from 1943 until 1946, during which time Talybont served in the Channel (including supporting the D-Day landings), the North Sea and the Mediterranean.

Belfast certificate

S/M ALEX McKee was awarded a certificate when he became Vice President of Belfast branch.

S/M McKee has selflessly served the branch for the past 50 years and has seen it grow from humble beginnings to the thriving branch and club that exists today.

Deepes gather in Portsmouth

THE International Submariners Association (ISA) is holding its annual congress in Portsmouth from May 18-21.

Brian De-Mullet, president of ISA (GB), which is hosting the event, will welcome more than 230 people from 20 countries.

The congress has two purposes, to remember those submariners who have crossed the bar and to celebrate the special comradeship enjoyed by those who have served in the submarine service – friend and foe alike.

On boat trips in the Solent, arranged for the evening of Tuesday May 19, memorial wreaths will be cast onto the water.

On Thursday May 21 at 11am a memorial service will be held at the Portsmouth Naval Memorial on Southsea Common.

Brian and his ISA-GB members have also organised visits to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, to the Royal Navy Submarine Museum in Gosport and to Arundel Castle in Sussex.

There will be plenty of opportunity for delegates to meet new friends and renew old friendships at pre-arranged lunches and dinners.

ISA-GB has according to tradition been the guardian of 'the column' – a 3ft brass token held by the next host of the congress – for the past year after it was handed to them by ISA-Greece who hosted in 2014.

At the final dinner at Portsmouth Guildhall on Thursday May 21, Brian will hand the Column to the delegation from Croatia.

Countries expected to attend the British congress include Argentina, Australia, Belarus, Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Russia, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Turkey, Ukraine and the USA.



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Where to look

RNTMs

07/15 Use of flexible working practices for a healthy workforce
070/15 RN Photographic Competition 2015
063/15 WO Staff Course (WOSC)
027/15 Faraday guidance

Galaxy briefs

08-2015 Armed Forces Pay Award 2015
07-2015 Forces Help to Buy update
06-2015 2SL Supersession
05-2015 RN Strategic Message House
04-2015 New RN uniform
03-2015 RN Cyber Strategy
02-2015 Defence Gateway

DINS

DIN 2015DIN01-044 New Employment Model Terms of Service
DIN 2015DIN01-059 Reserve Service and UK benefits system
DIN 2015DIN01-063 Promotion Air Engineer SUY to Sub Lt E(AE)
DIN 2015DIN01-064 POAEMs transfer to the AET stream
DIN 2015DIN02-002 Volunteers for Specialist HUMINT Duties
DIN 2015DIN07-046 Chief Naval Engineer Officer's conference/ engineer officers' dinner May 19

NEED to get your message across?

To feature in the Navy News Two-Six pages contact Navy Command Media – Internal Comms Staff Officer: Lt Cdr Emma McCormick, 93832 8809, email NAVY.MEDIACOMMS-IC-TL@NAVY.MEDIACOMMS-IC-TL@mod.uk

If you've not seen the latest edition of Two-Six on DVD, you can catch up with the last two years' worth on our Youtube channel – just search for TwoSixTV.

Spiritual assembly

NAVAL chaplains left their 'parishes' behind for a day to reflect on their job at their spiritual home, the Armed Forces Chaplaincy Centre at Amport House near Andover.

After an act of worship to begin the annual conference, Chaplain of the Fleet the Ven Ian Wheatley provided an overview of the current state of play and the future of the branch, while his deputy Martyn Gough outlined the current work of RN chaplains and highlighted key upcoming changes.

Capt Mike Young, the RN's Head of Personal, Family, Community Support and Physical Development, was the first of two guest speakers, using his session to describe the crucial role that the welfare service plays in the life of a sailor and Royal Marine – and of which chaplains are a fundamental part.

The second presentation came from someone who knows the world of both the military and religion: Caroline Wyatt, until recently the BBC's defence correspondent, now their authority on religious affairs.

The day's events drew to a close by formally accepting four new 'bishes' into the bosom of the RN with a 'service of welcome': the Revs John Money, Eddie Wills and Mark Noakes who are currently in their first assignments either at sea or with the Royal Marines, and the Rev

Neil Gardner, who was recently appointed as honorary chaplain in the Royal Naval Reserve.

Each was presented with a preaching scarf and commission parchment as formal recognition that they are now truly part of the Naval Chaplaincy family.

There are currently 58 full-time chaplains and a growing number of reservists are being recruited to extend the reach of the Naval Chaplaincy Service.

■ DARK blue, camouflage print or just download to your phone or tablet – Christians in the Royal Naval Service have a choice when it comes to requesting a free copy of the Bible.

The Naval Military and Air Force Bible Society, which has been running for 235 years, last year granted more than 60,000 items of Christian literature to ships, military units and cadet corps in the UK and worldwide.

Entirely funded by voluntary donations and grants, the society is able to supply Bibles, New Testaments, and other Christian literature in a wide range of formats.

Executive director of the society, Matthew Thomas, a former RN Lt Cdr, said: "I would like to raise awareness of the society in Naval circles. I served for 25 years, starting as a Midshipman and I do not recall

hearing about the society nor seeing any of the books during my Naval career."

New Testaments with distinctive covers and Service badges are offered to new recruits at initial training establishments.

New Testaments are printed with bespoke covers for the Royal Navy and the Submarine Service, alongside the camouflage versions for the Army, Royal Marines and RAF. Bibles are available with camouflage covers and hard-backed Bibles can be die-stamped with unit crests, on request.

Founded as the Bible Society in November 1779, the NMAFBS first granted Bibles to officers aboard HMS Victory.

Described as the world's first mission to seamen, the Society has also supplied merchant sailors of every nationality since 1820, through seafarers' missions.

In 1787 the society presented a Bible to an officer on board HMS Bounty before the ship sailed for the South Pacific. The Bounty Bible is now on display in the Pitcairn Island Museum.

For details or to request a Bible visit www.nmafbs.org or email info@nmafbs.org. Follow the society on Twitter @NMAFBS or Facebook at www.facebook.com/PO28RN.



ETs, PEs, UMMs and SIPs, ok?

ON APRIL 1, all CIS personnel will formally become part of the WE department, becoming ET(WE)(CIS) ratings. All you need to know about how this will affect you is detailed in the Vesting Day RNTM (088/15).

Our revised engineering branch badges are now being introduced in both the general and Submarine Service. The new badges are being supplied directly to Naval stores. Further details can be found in the RNTM which was issued in late March (086/15). Moving to the new badges is at the discretion of unit COs. Units are requested to be conscious of the ongoing PCS rollout programme when planning the move across.

Provisional exams (PE) were used for the first time in a promotion board this month and proved a great way to demonstrate merit. The key message is: for those that want to get on and present evidence to the board, the PE is exactly the way to do it – and it works. With a PE in the bank, individuals need to make sure the board sees the evidence – which means ensuring it is reported in SJAR. If a pass is after your report is finalised, make sure the board sees a special report recording it.

Work continues on the production of the Engineers Electronic Career Development Journal (e-CDJ) and the latest review of the Individual Competence Framework (ICF). Anyone wishing to view the current ICF (v5.4) can now access it via the Faraday

Faraday

webpage.

In the Support Improvement Programme (SIP) delivery area, the first of the Phalanx Deep Technical Specialists has been nominated and will begin a placement with Babcock in June. The Devonport Ship's Engineering Support Team is now well manned and has had a busy time during the Devonport peak engineering load period. Since September, it has delivered in excess of 6,000 man hours of engineering support to RN ships alongside, 60 personnel (10 LETs, 8 ETs and 42 ET2s) benefitted from engineering experience and feedback has been universally positive.

Work continues to address reported issues with onboard tools, test and diagnostic equipment. Progress has been made this month with finalising the roll out programme for Virtual Bridge, the provision of gas-powered soldering irons, electrostatic work mats, and the Novomax Breaker TS1 Test Sets. This shows the ability of the support organisation to deliver improvements (in targeted areas). However, we know we have a lot more to do.

The revised Stores Shortage Feedback process (RNTM 175/14) is working to better focus Inventory Managers' (IM) attention

on resolving current shortages and the development of improved procurement. It has proven to be a very useful tool for Ships Supply Chain departments to query stores shortages (over 800 SSFs submitted, with the majority being answered within the month of submission). Engineers are encouraged to engage with their Logs counterparts to gain an awareness of how this process is working to improve the supply chain and IM functions.

The WSpt-SMM team has provided some targeted feedback to reported issues with 'UMMS usability', an overview of the focus on UMMS improvements is highlighted in this month's Faraday-SIP Rolling Brief.

SIP Phase 2 is 'surging' around 100 people into DE&S (inc 60 RN) in key areas to prompt tangible changes. The first 15 have already arrived – working as the Maritime Supply Chain Improvement Team – and over the next few months we will report the benefits that they are producing.

The Faraday and SIP Team will let you know what has been happening during April in next month's article, so please look out for this regular feature. If you have any questions or comments on Programme Faraday and/or the Support Improvement Programme contact me, WO1 Robbie Robson, on 93832 7441 or via e-mail NAVY.ENG.SPT-HUM.CAP.WO1A. The Programme Faraday Intranet site can be found via the A-Z.

Mountain deeps...

THESE – quite clearly from the location and attire – are submariners, half of a ten-strong group of marine engineers from HMS Victorious' starboard crew, who made use of AT facilities at the Naval Outdoor Centre Germany in Bad Oberdorf, Bavaria.

Although many of the deeps had never skied before, the centre's tutors soon had them on the slopes at Oberjoch, practising a range of basic skills.

By the end of the week, all the group had gained the Ski Foundation 1 qualification, with the more experienced ET Brett Mercer completing the Foundation 2 course.

"This was the first time I have done adventurous training and I now wish I'd taken it up sooner," said CPO(ET) Laurence Cooper.

"The course was physically demanding, but extremely enjoyable. It gave us a chance to learn new skills, test our personal limits and to socialise with other ranks and rates from different branches of the Naval Service."

The deeps were at the NOCG shortly before outgoing Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir David Steel formally opened the facility in its new home, the Hotel Hirsch.

Lt Col Martin Price and his NOCG staff hosted 65 local dignitaries who were entertained with Mess Beatings by a Royal Marines Corps of Drums and a Bavarian Alpenhorn Quintet.

Admiral Steel presented Herbert Lott Efficiency Awards to LWtr Suzi Cavanagh and A/LET Dan Kell for their hard work during the move from the centre's previous venue.

Since moving to the new location in September – a four-star hotel complete with gymnasium, CV suite and saunas – more than 1,000 sailors and Royal Marines have made use of the weekly adventurous training packages.

Those packages include mountain biking, rock climbing, Klettersteig and kayaking in the autumn term and skiing and ski-touring from December through the winter.

All attendees leave with AT qualifications – and all activities are provided by RN/RM personnel, plus civilian AT instructors. Units can apply for places through www.nocg.co.uk.

Potential visiting instructors should liaise direct with: NAVY-PERS-NOCG.2IC (Wilkins, Johnathan CPOPT)



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Join the Navy, see the world ...in a yacht

AN RN/RM crew is needed to take a yacht around the globe on each of the 13 legs of an adventurous sailing challenge with the Army and RAF.

All three Services will send yachts from the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre on a world tour, leaving Gosport in July and returning in August 2016.

The crew for Transglobe 15/16 – sequel to a similar event in 2009/10 – will change at the end of each of leg, which will last between three and six weeks.

Destinations include Lanzarote, Rio de Janeiro, Cape Town, Perth, Sydney, Hobart, Wellington, Auckland, Montevideo, Grenada, Miami, New York, and Halifax.

All personnel – including reservists, URNU members and members of Cadet organisations over the age of 18 – can apply.

Participants are expected to make a personal contribution towards the flights, but after various grants, this is expected to range between £160 and £730.

Details can be found in DIN 2014 07-079.

WE are glad to C you

FROM April 1 the world of Communications and Information Systems will cease to fall under the overarching banner of warfare and move into the realm of weapon engineering.

Sailors from HMS Diamond, Trenchant and Somerset became the first to receive the new badges marking the merger of CIS with WE and CISSM with WESM.

The change – which means Communications and Information Systems sailors and submariners will become ET(WE)(CIS) and ET(WESM)(CIS) at the able seaman rank, for example – is one of several significant changes in weapon engineering introduced as part of the Faraday programme.

The close ties between the WE and CIS branches – with engineers and the warfare world working ‘hand in glove’ for a number of years and considerable overlap in the realm of information warfare – plus the increasing skills of the CIS branch in network operation, administration and maintenance,

meant boundaries between the two branches became blurred.

And so as of April 1, the formal transfer of all warfare CIS and CISSM personnel into the Weapon Engineering Branch will begin.

Wearing the new badge – along with the ETs who have been selected for CIS and those who will join the branch from new-entry this year – the stream will grow, but it will take some time to forge a fully integrated branch.

“Despite my limited experience in the Royal Navy, I understand that the communications branch is becoming increasingly technical, integrating with weapon engineering is a positive step for the RN and support to future operations,” said Trenchant’s ET(WESM)(CIS) Peter Miles.

“It’s an aspect of the job I look forward to learning more about and becoming increasingly involved in.”

New career courses are being developed at Collingwood and the RN Submarine School at Raleigh which will provide CIS engineering technicians with the knowledge and skills to perform



● Trenchant’s ET(WE)(CISSM) Peter Miles and ET(WE)(CIS) Alice Youngman of HMS Somerset hold up their new branch badges

Picture: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies, FRPU West

all of the functions provided by today’s communications engineers and CIS specialists.

In the future they will be responsible for the operation, maintenance, diagnosis and repair of command, communication, information and network systems.

LET(WE)(CIS) Dez Little – who joined as an OM(C) over a dozen years ago – believes his career is “better suited to what we have to offer the Fleet” as a weapon engineer.

Diamond shipmate LET(WE)(CIS) Adelle Knibbs adds: “I hope all other CIS ratings agree with me that the future in the WE branch will be a big change but

also a brilliant one.”

Diamond’s CO Cdr Marcus Hember says bringing the CIS world under the wing of weapon engineering reflects the technological transformation that the RN has undergone in recent years.

“The mantra ‘no comms – no bombs’ remains a truism, and the proud ethos of support to the warfighter which unifies both CIS and WE personnel will be strengthened by this development, at the same time offering a stronger and more sustainable career path to the Navy’s highly skilled specialist communications personnel,” he added.

Having a ball

LESBIAN, gay, bisexual or transgender military personnel are invited to the second LGBT veterans summer ball.

All three Forces LGBT forums have joined up to show respect and thanks to veterans who served at a time when being open about their sexuality would mean intrusive investigation – and dismissal from the military.

Last summer’s inaugural ball attracted 100 guests and raised £1,000 each for the Royal British Legion and the Albert Kennedy Trust, which helps LGBT people who are homeless.

The 2015 event is open to former/serving personnel who identify as LGB or T – plus supporters of the LGBT and military community.

Tickets for the June 7 ball at London’s Victoria Park Plaza Hotel are £40 per person, with money raised split between SSAFA and Broken Rainbow.

Details from Cpl Al Smith at Alistair.Smith854@mod.uk.

£11m loans to homebuyers

SAILORS and Royal Marines received £1m every month during the first 11 months of the Forces Help to Buy Scheme.

Some 760 members of the Naval Service took advantage of the initiative by the end of February, on average being loaned £14,700.

Santander has now signed up for the initiative, offering mortgages in conjunction with an advance under the help to buy scheme. Details can be found in Galaxy 22-14.

Putting the logic into logistics

THE Senior Ratings’ Logistics Branch Career Management team in West Battery restructured in the autumn of 2014.

We now have a senior rate of each specialisation career managing their own specific cadre.

This has been well received by the customer base allowing the team to utilise their experience and deliver career plans – together with associated training opportunities – that align with the aspirations of the individual and meet the Service requirement.

Implementing recommendations from a review undertaken last year will also deliver significant improvements to Junior Rates’ Logistics Branch Career Management.

Lt Cdr Sarah Street joins as the new SO2 Logistics Ratings’ Career Manager on April 13, bringing greater coherence to the career management of junior ratings.

A further enhancement will be seen when Logistics Branch Senior Rates are embedded in the three Naval Base career management centres, providing an important management function to career managers who are already doing a cracking job.

Regular dialogue with your career manager is an important part of the process and career interviews should be considered at the nine to 12-month point before you leave your current unit.

Plot management can be extremely dynamic, so please be patient and make sure your JPA preferences and contact details are kept up to date.

A quick sales pitch: career management is a demanding – but thoroughly rewarding and hugely privileged – occupation.

For those out there who want a different challenge that will open your eyes to manpower management, I urge you to consider a job as a career manager.

Not only will it challenge your management skills, it will provide another theme to your employment portfolio that can only enhance your promotion prospects.

The team will be conducting

Drafty's corner



their annual roadshows across the country in June and will be delighted to talk to prospective candidates.

Manpower and Promotion

There continue to be increased demands placed upon the branch. The branch remains under constant scrutiny to deliver the best for defence.

Our sea/shore ratios and the relative priority of sea/shore posts is often questioned as the branch output is not always recognised.

Increasingly, the branch and career management teams hear examples of personnel claiming to have completed ‘sea time’ when patently this is not the case (ie personnel have not actually deployed even if in a ‘sea’ tagged unit).

Promotion boards will often recognise success at sea or other operational assignments as a clear demonstration within the definition of merit.

This does not preclude other posts (especially support to operations), providing an opportunity to demonstrate merit, but individuals would do well to be aware of where ultimately defence output materialises.

Green Skills

The ‘braiding’ process is complete and RN Logistics personnel are now fully embedded into Royal Marines units providing excellent support; although well established, there is still some further work to refine the prioritisation process.

We have moved away from ‘braiding’ to the development of ‘green skills’, which will provide our people with the ability to protect themselves and allow them to remain self-sustaining when deployed with a commando unit. These positions deliver exciting opportunities and varied employment, particularly for those who deploy to operational theatres. Furthermore, these assignments also provide a reasonable balance of harmony time.

Logistics Training – DMLS Move to Worthy Down

Following a recent visit to Worthy Down by Second Sea Lord and the Naval Secretary, the strategic intent for the DMLS to move there was re-affirmed.

Considerable progress has been made and a reassurance has been given that both dark blue ethos will be retained and that training at Worthy Down will be at least as good as it is at HMS Raleigh.

There remain some infrastructure challenges, but the move is programmed for late 2018/early 2019.

This move will provide training/instructional opportunities in the Portsmouth area, but a coherent career management plan will be developed for the transition phase and will recognise the needs of those personnel serving in the Devonport area.


Family Services

For those of you interested in working with people, who are good communicators and are highly motivated then the family service specialisation could be just for you.

Recruiting will commence for the 2016 Initial Training Course with the release of an RNTM in May, alongside a recruitment campaign for the Royal Marines Welfare Sub-specialisation.


A paper sift will identify suitable candidates, followed by interviews in July.

If anyone has an enquiry about the branch transfer process, please contact the family service career manager/special advisor WO1 Sian Timms on 01752 555041(9375 65041)/02392 628871 (93832 8871).




Naval Families Federation


Offering an independent voice to Royal Naval and Royal Marines families




We talk directly to Government Ministers and senior Naval personnel – what points would YOU like us to raise?



We are busy!
The number of enquiries into the office has increased by 33% when compared to 2013




Did you know?
Only 5,000 RN/RM families live in Service Family Accommodation – the majority live in their own homes, all over the UK



Out and about
The NFF is a core team of 6. In 2014 we attended 455 meetings and events around the UK and overseas


We can:

- Spot trends of concerns
- Provide information
- Advocate for families
- Challenge and influence policy
- Clarify rules
- Demystify the system
- Mediate between parties
- Pick up complex issues
- Access the MOD and Government
- Offer a listening ear



What are people talking to us about?

- Housing: 31%
- Signposting: 23%
- Service issues: 22%




Who is contacting the NFF?


- Serving personnel: 42%
- Spouses: 29%
- Other: 16%

And where do they live?

- Portsmouth: 11%
- Plymouth: 9%
- Gosport: 7%




“Very supportive. Helpful and understanding, and helped to resolve matters quickly. Thank you”




Most families don't need a voice – you are independent and resourceful. However:

- If you are struggling to resolve an issue
- If you are getting bogged down by red tape
- If have something you want to say
- Or if you would like the NFF to give a brief, please get in touch



ROYAL FLEET AUXILIARY

We also assist Reservist and RFA families






Armed Forces Covenant

We have a dedicated Armed Forces Covenant team that represents RN/RM families concerns to Local Authorities and service providers, helping to progress the reach and impact of the Covenant. The team attended 191 events and meetings in 2014

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● Lt (SCC) Peter Lucas RNR

Whitehaven loyalty is rewarded

THE CO of Whitehaven unit received a long service award for 24 years' service as a uniformed member of the Corps.

Lt (SCC) Peter Lucas RNR was presented with his award, a certificate and clasp to his long service medal, during a visit by Lt Paul Kilbride RN, Executive Officer of the cadet unit's affiliated ship HMS Ramsey.

A former Whitehaven Sea Cadet, Peter Lucas continued his association when he joined the unit as a Civilian Instructor in 1988. He became a uniformed member of the team as PO (SCC) in 1991, achieved his current rank in 1999 and was appointed CO in 2009 – the second time he has held this position.

Speaking after the presentation, Peter said that he had been caught completely off-guard.

"When you enjoy something as much as I enjoy being a part of the Sea Cadets you really don't think about how long you have been involved," he said.

"I had no idea at all that the award had been sent through to the unit, and was genuinely surprised when Lt Kilbride called me forward and made the presentation."

Lt Kilbride, who was accompanied by another member of the ship's company, AB Matthew Mossom from Maryport, spoke to cadets about the ship's recent activities – including three years in the Gulf – and presented the unit with a specially-produced book of photographs.

St Albans to create new parade ground

ST ALBANS unit has been granted £50,000 by the Community Covenant Fund to create a parade ground and external classroom at their HQ.

When finished, the area – around 600 square metres – will also include a monument/memorial to HMS St Albans and

the other Royal Navy ships with which the City and District has historic associations.

There will be a service of dedication to which civic leaders and serving personnel from HMS St Albans will be invited.

The Community Covenant Grant Scheme was established to support the community covenant

and to fund local projects that bring together the civilian and Armed Forces communities.

£30m, over four years, was set aside to establish the scheme, and some £11m has been allocated to projects supporting the Forces and their communities to date.

Unit staff and the management committee have worked closely with members of Hertfordshire County Council, who oversee local applications to the Fund.

The unit also had support from RN officers, county and district councillors.

The unit recognises that this considerable financial boost only came about through the teamwork of people from many establishments, all of whom have the cadets' best interests at heart while also remembering those that served or are still serving in the Royal Navy.

Unit cadets once again lowered

their Cadet Ensign and raised the Jolly Roger for Pirates Night as they raised money for Comic Relief.

Some 40 cadets and eight staff swapped their uniforms for traditional pirate garb, and with cutlasses and lots of 'pirate banter' had an evening of fun while raising money for a good cause.

Capn' Salty (aka Sub Lt (SCC) Ted Hill RNR), the unit's Executive Officer, said (we translate loosely from pirate dialect here): "We have had a busy few weeks preparing for our annual inspection, and while we wait for the results it's great to let off a bit of steam, have some fun and raise money for Comic Relief."

Ted continued: "We will be getting into the boating season from April so we are all looking forward to that."

The evening raised over £130.



● Lt Cdr (SCC) Micky Shone RNR

End of a lustrous career

A SEA Cadet officer who believes he was born to be in the Royal Navy is preparing to hang up his uniform after a career spanning six decades.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Micky Shone RNR, who lives in Torpoint, joined the Royal Navy in 1964.

He left the Service 34 years later and immediately started a new career with the Corps, firstly as the Executive Officer of the National Sea Cadet Training Centre at HMS Raleigh, and more recently as Officer-in-Charge.

Micky said: "Working here has allowed me to continue using the skills that I learnt in the Royal Navy to look after young people."

"Some of the cadets who have come through during my time are now coming back as SCC Officers, which is really encouraging."

"It's been wonderful to be part of the Sea Cadet family."

Micky arrived at the Royal Navy Careers Office at the tender age of 15, but was sent away because at 4ft 7in, he was deemed too small to join the Service.

He tried a series of stretching exercises, and after three months went back again.

"They measured me at 4ft 10in, so they let me in because they could see I was still growing."

Five years in, he transferred to the PT branch, and served in warships and shore bases, including Portugal and Hong Kong.

Throughout his time in the Service Micky's main sport was boxing, and he coached the RN to two successes against the Army and became involved in the England boxing squad.

He was appointed national coach to Portugal helped prepare the Scottish squad for the Edinburgh Commonwealth Games in 1986. He was offered the job as the Scottish National Coach, but turned it down because of Service commitments.

Micky was awarded the BEM in 1978 in recognition of his contribution to Service sport.

Micky said: "Being in the Royal Navy is in my opinion one of the finest careers ever."

"When I joined the Service I had no idea of what the Navy could offer me."

"Over the years I have been spoilt by good friends who have been there to support me, and I hope that I've been there for them in return."

Now aged 66 Micky is ready for some time out with his family. "I'm leaving Raleigh with great trepidation," he said.

"I've always admired what the establishment produces both for the Royal Navy and the Sea Cadet Corps."

He added: "I've now had 51 years of employment in uniform and I can honestly say I've enjoyed every day. I'm sure I was born to wear a Naval uniform."



● Fred Skeet (left) presents the model of HMS Valiant to CPO (SCC) Matt Tucker

Model occasion

BARNSTAPLE unit have been presented with a scale model of Queen Elizabeth-class battleship HMS Valiant, which saw service in both world wars – and shares its name with the unit's training ship.

The 1/192-scale model, 112cm long in its display case, was built from scratch by Fred Skeet, from Dyfed, Wales, between 2013 and 2014.

It took 18 months for Mr Skeet, who is retired but was head

curator at Strata Florida Abbey near Tregaron in Ceredigion, to build Valiant, one of 16 models which he has presented to various museums and embassies.

Mr Skeet donated the model to a very grateful CPO (SCC) Matt Tucker, who said: "I'm stunned at the amount of skill and work that has gone into making this model and the generosity of Mr Skeet in donating it to our unit."

"It will become the centre piece of our displays."



● Market Harborough unit has reached another significant milestone by being formally recognised and affiliated by the parent organisation, the Marine Society and Sea Cadets. To mark this occasion, the unit – whose first CO is Shane Daly, and First Lieutenant is Alex Dodds – were awarded, and can now proudly wear, cap tallies bearing the unit name, TS Fernie SCC. Pictured are founding members, staff, the unit management team and Sea Cadets of Market Harborough



● The Lions Club of St Austell presented St Austell unit with a cheque for £500, presented by Lions President Geoff Kaye (above), who warmly thanked them for their help in manning the Club's Christmas Sleigh last December

Rewarded by Stationers

OUTSTANDING Royal Marines cadets in London and Essex have been presented with awards by the Stationers' Company.

The most successful detachment was judged to be Kingston, under the leadership of Lt Greaves, Sgt Wilde and Sgt Trovalusci, which was London Area's top detachment for the third year running.

Cdt Sgt Tony Green, of Hornchurch Detachment,

was chosen as the most outstanding individual cadet.

Tony won the award as a corporal, but picked it up as a sergeant, as he was recently promoted.

His Detachment Commander, Sgt (SCC) Pace, says that Tony's commitment to the Royal Marines Cadets is beyond reproach. His positive attitude and exemplary behaviour sets a fine example to his fellow cadets and he is an outstanding role model.



PICTURED left is a grand total of 355 years (yes, they have double-checked the maths) of Sea Cadets in Wandsworth, Chelsea and Fulham.

To mark the handover of command from Lt (SCC) Don Holland RNR (seated right) to Lt (SCC) Joe Roots RNR (seated left), former cadets and staff flocked back to the unit's Putney Embankment headquarters to celebrate Don's 25 years as the CO of TS Challenger and to congratulate Joe on his new appointment.

Don joined Chelsea unit 50 years ago as a cadet, becoming an Instructor Cadet on his 18th birthday.

In 1988 Chelsea unit was merged with Putney and Don became the new unit's first CO.

During Don's 25 years in charge the unit has gone from strength to strength – few units can claim to have represented London Area at a National competition every year for 20 years, or have won, at some point, nearly every Sea Cadet competition.

Thanks in part to Wandsworth's riverside location and Don's enthusiasm for getting cadets afloat, the hours cadets spend boating are consistently more than twice the national average.

Wandsworth have also supported and mentored the foundation of the new unit at

Chiswick; the first in London for many years.

During Don's tenure in charge it is estimated that well over 300 cadets and staff have at some time been a member of TS Challenger.

Alumni include three Royal Navy officers and three SNCOs, an Army signaller, a police chief inspector, teacher, firefighter, doctor, a senior technician for McLaren Cars, superyacht officer, chef and a television presenter, to name just a few. It was a testament to Don's leadership that so many returned to wish him well.

Don has no plans to retire from the Sea Cadet Corps yet and is staying on at Wandsworth unit to help inspire more youngsters.

A quarter-century of achievements

Trio in final bid for Africa

AFTER an anxious wait, CVQO has revealed the names of the 24 Duke of Westminster Award regional finalists who will be heading to Outposts, Somerset, this month.

This includes three Sea Cadets from across the UK: Matthew Hewish (Rugby unit) from Warwickshire district, Katy Jamison (Dundonald unit) from Northern Ireland and Jacob Wood (Huyton with Roby unit) from Merseyside East district.

The group will take part in a four-day selection event in Somerset to determine the nine national finalists who will be heading to South Africa for a two-week educational expedition.

One of these will also be crowned the overall winner at the House of Lords lunch event on June 30 in London.

The CVQO manages vocational qualifications for members of the British cadet organisations.

More than a token

HASTINGS Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets have thanked Asda, St Leonards and their local community for supporting them in the Asda Green Token Charity Appeal.

The unit was very pleased to be presented with a £200 cheque from Asda for winning the support of their shoppers.

TS Hastings Sea Cadets currently holds the Stephenson Trophy for being the best Sea Cadet unit in the South East of England.

Working with local company Mckimmie Builders, the unit is also looking to a bright future with the building of a new bespoke Main Deck with outdoor climb wall and observation deck with views out to sea.

Barnsley plaudits

BARNSELY unit's Royal Navy Parade is over for another year, and cadets and staff are now just waiting for the results.

Awards for the year included: **Most Boating Hours:** POC Rosie Clark; **Band Trophy:** L Jnr Megan Smith; **Commando Spirit:** Joe Myers; **Most Improved Cadet:** Cdt Rio Wall; **Best Junior Sea Cadet:** L Jnr Megan Smith; **Best Royal Marines Cadet:** L/Cpl Oliver Ingham; **Best Sea Cadet:** POC Rosie Clark.

The evening saw cadets performing ceremonial duties, and they later staged a show with a *Monty Python* theme to demonstrate some of the skills they have learnt.

Special thanks went to POCs Clark and Vamplew, who co-wrote and directed the show, along with L/Cpl Ingham, who narrated it.

Building grant

DOES your unit have a building project that needs funding?

You could receive a grant worth up to £50,000 with Jewson's Building Better Communities scheme.

Find out more on the T and A website (members' area) at www.scheadquarters.com/funding-ops or at www.buildingbettercommunities.co.uk

The deadline is April 12.



Close-knit Truro take Gibraltar Cup

ALMOST 50 top-notch Royal Marines Cadets gathered at Lympstone – but only the eight from Truro unit succeeded in the ultimate challenge.

A total of 137 Royal Marines Cadet (RMC) detachments are assessed and scored in the initial stages of the Gibraltar Cup competition, the ultimate test of physical endurance, determination and teamwork.

Held every March since 1955, cadets train for months to be in for a chance of winning the title of the best detachment in the country.

The top-rated teams from each area go on to the weekend-long competition, held at the Commando Training Centre RM.

For the 48 RMCs who take part, the Gibraltar Cup is the chance to put to the test the skills they have learnt through months of hard work and intensive training, such as leadership and communication.

Despite the everyday pressures of schools and exams, the cadets have thrown themselves whole-heartedly into the event, demonstrating their morale, communication, and Corps spirit and values.

They all arrived at Lympstone, near Exmouth, on Friday and headed straight for a kit inspection, weapon-handling test and the cadet in charge of their detachment briefed the team about what to expect the following day.

Saturday dawned bright and sunny, but the cadets did not have time to admire the scenery on Devon's Woodbury Common.

The first day of competition challenged their navigation and communication skills to the limit as they plotted a course between six points on the common, each point providing an unknown challenge to test their teamwork and resourcefulness.

Adrenaline ran high as they stormed bunkers, ran rescue



missions and navigated through unknown territory.

Plunged into challenging situations, the training could only get cadets so far, as their ability to react quickly and think calmly under pressure was assessed and scored by serving Royal Marines.

Sunday proved to be no day of rest as, after a good night's sleep, the competitors were ready to tackle the 'Bottom Field', a stretch of obstacles that tested their physical and mental endurance (pictured).

From swinging across monkey bars over a water-filled tank to carrying an 80kg weight over 6ft walls and under netting, each team was put through their paces in pursuit of that coveted cup.

Truro emerged triumphant, and their Commander, Sgt (SCC) Nathan Malcolm, was in no doubt why they won the prize. "I think Truro won because of how close-knit a team they are," he said.

"They really look after each

other, and in the training gave up every single weekend and evening to develop themselves as Royal Marines Cadets.

"Their determination to bring the trophy back was phenomenal."

Malcolm says they began their training in November, as soon as they found out they had been nominated.

"We covered theory before Christmas and then every weekend after we'd do practical skills, such as map-reading, patrolling and moving in formation," he said.

"We'd go out on the ground and put what we'd learnt in the classroom to practice."

But it wasn't just the cadets who had to train hard.

The volunteers had to brush up on their skills to teach cadets the relevant subjects in preparation for competition.

"We had to do training ourselves, so we could develop the cadets," said Sgt Malcolm.

"The other instructor and I aren't that long out of Acting Sergeant roles, so we'd not long passed the courses ourselves."

The detachment was led by Cdt Cpl William, 16, who has been a cadet for four years.

"William is one of the best corporals I've seen in a long time," said Sgt Malcolm.

"He's able to communicate with the rest of the team easily. He gets stuck in and keeps a level head in pressured situations."

"It was a bit of a shock for the first few hours. No words could congratulate them enough on winning the trophy."

"They didn't just win it, they smashed it. By the time we got back to Truro, everyone was hyper and exhausted at the same time."

More than 30 volunteers were needed to run the weekend this year – not including the countless volunteers and supporters back at the detachments' units who have helped get the cadets ready for the competition.

The results:
1st – Alpha Company (Truro Detachment)
2nd – Zulu Company (Ashford Detachment)
3rd – Lima Company (Kingston Detachment)
4th – Bravo Company (Stockport Detachment)
5th – Xray Company (Welwyn Garden City Detachment)
6th – Yankee Company (Queensferry Detachment).

Weston knows the drill

WESTON-super-Mare cadets did themselves proud in two district drill competitions.

Unit Sea Cadets put forward five teams for their event, coming away as overall winners.

They also took more than their fair share of class awards, winning best guard, best colour party, best continuity drill, best guard commander and coming second in individual piping, team piping, squad and squad commander.

The winners were due to compete in the area competition, representing Avon District, as *Navy News* went to press.

Meanwhile, TS Weston's Royal Marines Cadets detachment took part in the Alpha Company drill competition – the first year the detachment has had sufficient numbers to take part.

The detachment came second out of five, taking lots of positive feedback with them.

Chairman retires

THE long-standing chairman of Barrow-in-Furness unit, John Hornby, has retired after 24 years on the unit management committee.

For the past 17 years, Mr Hornby has been chairman, overseeing massive changes to the Barrow unit.

These include the opening of the Sir John Fisher Sailing Centre in 1992, the purchase, refurbishment and opening of a new HQ building in 2005 and the upgrade of small boats to the tune of around £85,000 over the past eight years.

He was also in the hot seat when the Sailing Centre was upgraded in 2010 with an investment of around £50,000 – a series of achievements for which staff and cadets are most grateful.

Mr Hornby is succeeded as chairman by Lt Cdr Paul Douglas RN (ret'd), also a current member of the UMC.

Paul was a cadet and member of staff at Barrow before joining the Royal Navy as an officer.

Advanced success

CONGRATULATIONS to LC Elizabeth Lawton, from Swindon unit (Avon district) for achieving the challenging Advanced Seamanship qualification, which only 14 cadets accomplished last year.

Her achievement is part of a new national partnership with Sea Cadets and Carnival, parent company of Southampton-based P&O Cruises and Cunard, to support the Sea Cadets seamanship qualification, which will enable cadets to broaden their career options in the maritime industry.

Elizabeth is also the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Wiltshire.

Winging it

THE Commanding Officer of Barnsley unit CPO Caroline Devonport is planning to do a sponsored wing walk to raise money for the group.

She is hoping to raise at least £1,000, but would obviously love to raise much more – and you can show your support by sponsoring her at www.totalgiving.co.uk/mypage/wingwalkbarnsleyscc



Rox rocks as tech expert

ONE of the RN's leading lights in technology and training has been named '2015 Woman of the Year' by her industry peers.

Originally nominated as a top innovator for the FDM Everywoman in Technology Awards – which recognises women who have transformed the technology industry – 33-year-old Lt Cdr Roxane Heaton was named cream of the crop across the board.

"It was amazing being in a room full of such inspirational women," said Roxane, pictured above with previous winner Torie Chilcott, CEO of digital media firm Rockabox.

"It's a really exciting time for technology, may it continue to drive more people to make big changes which benefit people, health, research and the economy here in the UK and across the globe."

Roxane works at FOST headquarters in Devonport, where her work has contributed to the development of joint, coalition and NATO policies, including technology and digital content, which are providing more cost-effective training for use not just by the RN, but also by its allies.

Other winners included corporate leaders from large firms, technology entrepreneurs and go-getters predicted to be the tech champions of tomorrow.

Navy's most successful phot hangs up his lens

STRIKING out in civvy street after nearly 15 years of capturing some of the most famous images of the Royal Navy on the front line is its most decorated photographer in the modern era.

International newspapers and broadcasters have all used some of the iconic photographs taken by PO Sean Clee – particularly from his two tours of duty in Afghanistan with the Royal Marines.

From troops crouching down while they wait for a helicopter to pick them up to mud and dirt being flung up as enemy mortar rounds land around Royal Marines' positions, the 47-year-old was in the thick of the action on two tours of duty of Helmand, one with the green berets, the other with the red.

His mission – like the rest of his colleagues in the Royal Navy's photographic branch – to record deeds and actions, as well as everyday life, of the men and women of the Senior Service for our and future generations.

After six years as a coal miner, the senior rating, who lives in Plymouth, joined the Royal Navy in 1991, spending ten years as a missile operator.

He switched to photography in 2001 ("I thought it would be a lark") – a decision neither he nor the Navy has ever regretted.

His stills have won more than 15 awards – including the coveted RN 'Photographer of the Year' title an unprecedented three times – and there have also been three gongs for his video work.

The bulk of Sean's time as a photographer has been spent with 3 Commando Brigade – eight years in all



● Sean Clee, above, and some examples of his work, right



("the best photographic job there is in the Navy").

For all the awards arrayed on the Clee mantelpiece, the bulk of them from his time with the Royal Marines, it's the small, sometimes inconsequential things which stand out.

"Each picture has a story behind it. It might not necessarily mean anything to someone looking at it. But it does to those involved – and to me," Sean said.

"For me, what makes a good picture is natural light. I love working with it. The simpler, the better.

"And for all the awards, the mark of a good photographer is simple: Can you remember a picture they've taken?"

When Sean joined the branch in 2001, working with – and developing – film was still taught (today the branch is entirely digital).

Back then there was no social media and there wasn't quite the immediacy to get images out almost instantaneously – and ships at sea had very limited means for sending photographs back to the UK.

These days, the RN's email system means photographers can beam those shots back within minutes of them being captured by their cameras.

"You don't spend any time in the dark room – but the downside is that you spend a lot more time at a computer putting words to everything which is incredibly

time consuming," says Sean.

"So there's a lot of pressure on the guys to produce the goods quickly – compounded by the fact our branch has shrunk dramatically over the past 15 years.

"There is also a lot of time away – and that means a lot of strain on families."

Which is why after 24 years' service, he's hanging up his steaming bats – though not his lens.

"I joined the Navy to have a good time. And I have had a good time. Becoming a photographer is the best move I made," Sean says.

And it's one he's continuing in civilian life, concentrating on weddings, documentaries and video work.

Captains for just one day

PUPILS from Exeter Cathedral School were given an insight to what it's like to stand on the bridge of a Royal Navy warship during a visit to Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC).

The group of year four students were shown how to steer and navigate the warship in BRNC's state-of-the-art bridge simulator.

Configured in the shape of a ship's bridge, the simulator is one of the resources used to prepare Royal Navy Officer Cadets for their role at sea.

Other highlights of the visit included a tour around the college when the students were told about the history and role of BRNC.

Mrs Sarah Butler-Evans, one of the teachers accompanying the students, said: "The members of Exeter Cathedral School's Year 4 were extremely privileged to have the opportunity to experience a facility which is only usually afforded to Officer Cadets of the British Navy.

"They were wide-eyed as they negotiated submarines and other vessels, amidst turbulent waters, via the simulator.

"In the space of a short visit, the children were introduced to the history and traditions of Britannia Royal Naval College and some concepts of Naval maritime training. In addition they were allowed a glimpse of the future plans for the Queen



● Lt John-Paul Fitzgibbon shows Nicholas Piachaud-Moustakis, Marcus Sapiecha and Bobbie Reavill how to use charts for navigation

Picture: Craig Keating

Elizabeth and Prince of Wales aircraft carriers. They all had a marvellous time and, perhaps, a few careers may have been inspired by this exciting experience."

BRNC's bridge simulator has images outside of the windows to represent open sea or harbours and coastlines from around the world. It can be set-up to represent different classes of ships or submarines. Changes can be made to simulate different environmental conditions.

Savin up for sword award

THE Officers' Association has presented its annual Spirit of the Sword Award to Midshipman David Savin.

Mid Savin was praised by his superiors for his 'impressive performance during Initial Fleet Time' and for 'a positive and engaging attitude' throughout his training at Dartmouth.

Capt Henry Duffy said his 'team work and ability to help those around him without being overbearing, was a particular highlight of his performance.'

He added: "Showing a level of maturity when dealing with sensitive Mess Deck issues, Savin remained level headed throughout the embarkation; which contributed to his overall strong holistic performance."

Mid Savin, who passed out at BRNC at the end of December, said the toughest challenge for him was the 'physical demand' of Exercise Able.

"Being out in the elements from seven till five each day was a shock to the system and the Royal Marines certainly didn't go easy on us," said Mid Savin, who plans to eventually become a Weapon Engineer Officer.



● Mid Savin receives the Spirit of the Sword

The award was presented by Vice Admiral Richard Ibbotson on behalf of the Officers' Association and is given to the Officer Cadet who demonstrates the strongest adherence to the Naval Service's values throughout the training course.



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● Martin Heighway hands over the pine to headteacher Ian Potter

Gallipoli tree for school

GOSPORT-BASED Royal Naval Reserves Officer Martin Heighway presented the first of 100 Aleppo pine trees to the town's Bay House School where it will grow to become a living memorial to those who fought and died in the campaign 100 years ago.

Martin's grandfather, Richard Beresford Heighway served as a reservist private in the Herefordshire Regiment and was among the troops who landed at Suvla Bay in August 1915.

After the capture of Lone Pine Ridge, Cpl Benjamin Smith from the 3rd Battalion, AIF pulled a souvenir pine cone from Turkish trench cover and sent it home to his mother in New South Wales.

She kept the cone for 13 years before managing to produce two viable plants from it, one being planted at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra in 1934.

Hampshire organisations interested in planting a living memorial to the Gallipoli campaign contact Martin Heighway via: hmskingalfred.joto@royalnavymail.mod.uk

Festival of learning

AN educational awareness event held at Plymouth Naval Base has proved such a success it will be repeated next year.

Military and civilian staff were offered a wide spectrum of learning and development opportunities at the event in Devonport Naval Base.

The Naval Base Learning & Development Team in conjunction with the Education & Resettlement Centre staged the Devonport Festival of Learning.

More than 400 military and civilian staff attended stands with 35 local and national training providers showcasing a wide range of learning and development opportunities.

Cinders has fun (oh yes she does)



● Some of the cast from Cinderella beside a Search and Rescue Sea King from 771 NAS at RNAS Culdrose

SERVING personnel and their families at RNAS Culdrose had the pleasure of a touring pantomime.

In association with the British Forces Foundation (BFF), Culdrose Theatre Group hosted the pantomime Cinderella in the air station's theatre.

The two performances were for Service personnel and their families as well as Culdrose-based civilians.

Tickets were snapped up fast in the build up and a sell-out crowd of over 300 people were treated to a delightful experience.

"The show was very well received and pitched at exactly the correct level for the families," said Lt Mark Taylor, RNAS Culdrose theatre manager. "The interaction with the audience before, during and after the show was fantastic."

Whilst at the Air Station they took the opportunity to meet up with some of the audience for a photograph, in front of one of Culdrose's Iconic Search and Rescue Sea Kings from 771 NAS.

Artist's tribute to role of HMS Pickle

AN ARTIST has completed a mural in tribute to HMS Pickle at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth.

The painting, which adorns a wall in the reception of the Warrant Officers' and Senior Rates' Mess, depicts the schooner which was the first ship to bring news of Admiral Nelson's victory – and his death – at the Battle of Trafalgar.

Mark Kellett, who teaches at South Downs College at Waterloo, last year supervised students as they completed a mural about the Falklands Conflict in the mess.

"The Pickle painting took me three-and-a-half days to complete and I'm very pleased with the way it panned out," he said.

"In the past I painted a scene from the Battle of Trafalgar, which is currently hanging in the boardroom at Portsmouth FC but this is something very different and on a much larger scale compared to anything I've painted before."

Mark added that he wanted to produce a mural in a more traditional style compared to



● Mark Kellett

the Falklands mural so just used a brown bitumen, which is normally used to waterproof roofs, and washed the paint out with white spirit.

HMS Pickle was too small to take part in the fighting at Trafalgar but, as well as breaking the news of Nelson's victory when she arrived in Falmouth in November 1805, she also took part in a notable single-ship action when she captured the French privateer Favourite in 1807.

HMS Pickle, which was bought in January 1801 as Sting, sank after running aground near Cadiz in 1808.



● Nelson painted onto the sail of HMS Pickle on the mural in the reception area of the WO's and SR's Mess



Learning from the veterans

A GROUP of six from the Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch serving at RNAS Culdrose are bringing their years of experience to the training of a new batch of aircraft handlers.

Between them the veteran aircraft handlers, who have been in uniform for over five decades can boast a total of 327 years in age and span an incredible 229 years in Naval Service as handlers.

The oldest joined the Royal Navy in 1972 and has completed 43 years in regular and now Maritime Reserve service, including time on HMS Hermes and the old HMS Ark Royal in the 70s as well as the three later Invincible-class carriers.

Working across several departments at the air station now, they each have very fond memories of themselves when they joined the Royal Naval School of Flight Deck Operations (RNSFDO).

CPOA(AH) John Campbell said: "We are all still heavily involved with training the current bunch of youngsters coming through who will take up positions on the HMS Queen Elizabeth carriers."

POA(AH) Jan Rendall added: "The knowledge we've gained over the past 40-odd years serving as aircraft handlers is hopefully being passed onto this new generation."

Harmonious school visit

PUPILS at Bay House School, Gosport, were serenaded by the Royal Marines Band Portsmouth before joining in with the prestigious band.

The Royal Marines Band attended the school to provide the students with an insight into the Band Service.

Under the direction of Capt Darryl Powell the Director of Music at the Portsmouth-based band, the students had a demonstration of the full concert band followed by all the different ensembles that it breaks down to.

To the students' surprise the band then reformed to their function band setup and were then treated to some of the latest hits in the charts before the students joined the full concert band for a workshop.

The afternoon finished up with the pupils parents being invited to watch the Royal Marines band and their children perform a series of musical pieces some never before heard in public.



● Sophie, 18, playing the clarinet with a band member

Keeping it in the family

A PLYMOUTH couple have been rewarded for a combined 30 years of dedicated service to the Royal Navy.

Husband and wife LReg Glenn Martin and LDN Nichola Martin were presented with their Long Service and Good Conduct medals during a parade at HMS Raleigh.

Glenn is currently serving at the training establishment in Torpoint, while Nichola is based at Royal Marines Stonehouse.

Glenn, 37, said: "Nichola and I both joined the Royal Navy in 1999 and when we found out that we were to be presented with our LS&GCs we decided that we'd like to receive them together."

Since joining the Royal Navy, Glenn has served in five warships.

He started his career as a Writer and then transferred to the Royal Navy Police in 2008. He has also served ashore in Plymouth, Portsmouth and London and was involved in the military operation in Bosnia, known as Operation Althea.

Nichola, 34, is currently the practice manager of the dental department at Stonehouse Barracks. She has also worked with the Royal Marines at 42 Commando, Commando Logistics Regiment and in HMS Ocean.

Glenn and Nichola married in 2004 and have three daughters, Bronwyn, aged seven, Niamh, aged three and one-year-old Gwyneth.

Nichola said: "My family are really proud of me."



● Nichola and Glenn Martin



● Plymouth University students visited the dog section at HMNB Devonport
Picture: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies

Police take lead in show of skills

MINISTRY of Defence Police dogs at Plymouth Naval Base demonstrated their skills to students.

The Plymouth University Public Service Degree students were hosted by the dog section at HMNB Devonport, as part of their final-year studies.

The highly-trained animals and their handlers showed off their explosives-tracking skills and how to help apprehend a suspect on the run.

The students, Adam Riley, Benjamin Moore, Sam Griffiths, Ciaran Sheehan and Ryan Evans, were also shown the work of the MOD Police Marine Unit and went on the water on one of the fleet of patrol boats that gives 24-hour security cover to the Royal Navy fleet, property and personnel.

MOD Marine Police Sgt Chris Latham, who organised the event, said: "This was a very successful visit by the students who are specialising in police services as part of their

degree. There is mutual gain for both sides with the students learning the variety of tasks the MOD Police undertake and getting their degree – while on our side we are pleased to widen the knowledge of the public about the range of specialised duties that we are proud to undertake."

The MOD Police in Plymouth have a dedicated dog unit which is used for patrol security duties, detection (drugs and explosives) and as an added deterrent, a fleet of boats on the water protecting Royal Navy ships and submarines and providing escort.

MDP officers are deployed throughout the UK on security and policing duties at major MOD sites.

Student Benjamin, 21, of Newquay, said: "I was so interested in the MOD Police when we studied them earlier in the course that I am now going through the selection process to join them. I can't wait to join up."



● BRNC students visited Utah Beach during their trip

History lessons

OFFICER cadets under training at Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC) travelled to the beaches of Normandy to conduct a study into the D-Day landings.

The group made a week-long visit to France as part of an initiative introduced into the 30-week initial Naval training programme.

Starting with a brief stopover at Southwick Park, near Portsmouth, the cadets were able to take a look at the D-Day maps and gain an insight into the planning for the operation code-named Overlord.

The cadets were split into groups and given a reading list to research and analyse different aspects of the landings and evaluate how problems were overcome. In France they were required to give a presentation on their topic to their fellow cadets at specific points during the visit.

OC Jenny Greenfield said: "Being able to visit the beaches where the D-Day landings took place helped me to put into perspective how difficult and how arduous the conditions were for the troops landing on the beach.

"Omaha Beach in particular stuck out as it had steep cliffs, was heavily defended and had the highest number of casualties. It is difficult to imagine just what the troops felt as they had to run up the beaches carrying equipment whilst being shot at. It must have required a great deal of leadership from the junior officers to motivate people to run towards their possible death."

One of the aspects OC William Hussey was asked to consider was the creation and deployment of the Mulberry harbours and the Pipeline Under the Ocean (PLUTO). He said: "The Harbours have always been of interest to me. The sheer scale of the project was awesome and there are lessons to be drawn about planning for operations and the size of the logistic chain required for large operations."



● Nearly 1,000 sailors took part in Ceremonial Divisions at RNAS Cudrose in Cornwall

Pictures: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow

Riding high in the Premier Division

A SEA of 990 caps fills one of the cavernous hangars for the biggest such gathering of sailors at Cudrose in living memory.

Dressed in their finest uniforms, their breasts bristling with medals, men and women assigned to HMS Seahawk – the air station itself rather than the nine Fleet Air Squadrons which call the Cornish base their home – turned out in force for Ceremonial Divisions.

Historically Divisions are held to allow a ship's or unit's commanding officer to see all the men and women in their charge – in this case Capt Ade Orchard, who took charge of the air base on the Lizard peninsula in mid-January.

He took the opportunity to present Long Service and Good Conduct medals and clasps to seven personnel, as well as an Operational Service Medal to LA Richard Fisher for his recent service in Helmand.

"We have just returned from a long period operating in Afghanistan and there are

people with chests full of medals who are testament to this," said Capt Orchard, who himself flew Harrier combat missions over Afghanistan.

With Operation Herrick – codename for the British mission in Helmand – now complete, Cudrose is focusing its efforts in particular on paving the way for supporting the nation's future flagships.

The air station will provide both airborne early warning and anti-submarine Merlin helicopters for the Royal Navy's new carriers and train handlers who will marshal those aircraft as well as the F-35 Lightning II strike fighter. The Hawks of the base's 'aggressor squadron', 736, are being used to both develop tactics and train crews for the new jets' arrival.

Capt Orchard continued: "We look forward to a future in support of HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales – the strike aircraft carriers being built in Scotland – and the important role you will play in a new era for the Fleet Air Arm. We have a busy time ahead."



● Sailors from RNAS Cudrose line up for Ceremonial Divisions

Sailors help the Haven

THE Haven Children's Centre in Bridgemarky, Gosport, welcomed a team of sailors from HMS Sultan to help with some gardening challenges.

The Haven Children's Centre caters for children from pre-natal care right through to five years of age.

A group of Air Engineering Technicians from the Defence College of Technical Training's Royal Naval Air Engineering and Survival Equipment School spent two days regenerating outdoor areas within the Forest School.

Tasks completed included clearance work, repairing weather-worn bird boxes and the creation of a composter from old pallets so that the centre's staff can teach children about recycling. On top of all this the trainees were able to plant trees and bushes to create a natural barrier.

The project was one of many community engagement projects that the RNAESS has undertaken within the community in the last year.

AET Harry Chadwick, 18, who joined the Royal Navy in November, said: "I am in my third week of training at HMS Sultan and I am absolutely loving being part of the Navy."

The Haven's Business Manager Andy Major said: "We are so grateful to HMS Sultan for allowing the trainees to come and spend a couple of days doing valuable jobs for us that would otherwise have not been possible. The outdoor education of the children is an important feature of the centre.

"The natural barrier of trees doesn't look like much now but to the children who are so small by the summertime this will feel like a forest to them."



● AETs Jack Snow and Harry Chadwick plant some Christmas trees

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- getting the chance to meet such diverse figures as the Prime Minister, Bill Beaumont, Damian Lewis, David Beckham and Katherine Jenkins.

DOYRMS students were very proud to perform after The Sun Military Awards at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich.

Along with the on-stage performance, the School's Corps of Drums provided a guard of honour on the red carpet for many military heroes, royals and celebrities.

Rugby legend Bill Beaumont officially opened the school's new sports centre.

It has been named after former England rugby international, Maurice Colclough, who was a student of the school from 1965 until 1972 and captained its first team.

Sadly, Maurice died from a brain tumour in 2006. Bill played with Maurice for both England and the British Lions during the 1980s, and was honoured to perform the opening by unveiling a

plaque. Also present were Maurice's wife Annie and their four daughters.

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For more information on the admissions procedure and to arrange a visit to the school, please contact registrar Kate Evers on 01473 326136 or admissions@royalhospitalschool.org or visit www.royalhospitalschool.org



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-NOTICE-

The 151st Annual General Meeting
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Ask Jack

Cooks Badge: Does anyone know where Peter Metcalf can get an OC in a star, gold cooks' badge from? His was destroyed, in a house fire. He has the red one but can't find the gold one anywhere. He was an o/c/cook from 1964-75. Contact Peter at p.met@hotmail.co.uk or tel 07885 991056.

RN Commandos: Mike Kearney is researching the RN Commandos who have served since 1945. Mike's book will cover Palestine and Malayan Emergency (1948) and the Korean War in the early 1950s, to more recent conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, and any other deployments and operations in between plus any Cold War experiences. Readers with first-hand accounts of their time as RN Commandos or with a relative or friend who wore the green beret with Naval cap badge are asked to get in touch or pass on by post or email these vital pieces of Naval history. Photographs are particularly welcome. A proportion of the sales will be donated to Combat Stress. Contact Mike at michaelpaulkearney@outlook.com or by post at 3 How Street, The Barbican, Plymouth PL4 0DA.



Experience the action

COME along to Folkestone Racecourse and experience all the action and excitement of the **War and Peace Revival** from July 22-26.

Join the commemorations for the 75th anniversaries of Dunkirk and the Battle of Britain, the 200th anniversary of Gurkha service to the Crown, the 70th anniversary of the end of WW2, and the centenary of WW1.

Not interested in military? Then try dance lessons, browse the book signings, and catch up with cast members of *Allo Allo!*, then enjoy vintage entertainment before wandering the trade stalls.

Not sure where to start? Then take inspiration at the daily fashion events and hair and beauty demonstrations.

For more details see www.thewarandpeacerevival.co.uk or call 01304 813337/813945. Camping available with exclusive evening entertainment. Group rates and advanced ticket discounts available.

To win two family day tickets (each for two adults and two children) valid any one day of the War and Peace Revival from 22-26 July 2015, just answer this question: Who wrote the novel *War and Peace*?

Send your answer by email to warandpeace@navynews.co.uk or in the post to 'War and Peace Competition', Navy News, Mail Point 1-4, Navy Command, Leach Building, Whale Island, Portsmouth, PO2 8BY.

Entries must be received by mid-day on May 15 2015. Normal *Navy News* competition rules apply.

Short shrift for Big Cig



DENTAL specialists at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth – and their arch-nemesis Big Cig – were out and about promoting No Smoking Day 2015.

This year's campaign message was 'I'm proud to be a quitter', detailing the success of those who have given up the habit over past years.

Over 10 million people in the UK still smoke, and around 100,000 die every year from smoking-related causes.

The dental department are keen to promote no smoking, not just on National No Smoking Day but all year round.

According to the department, the oral implications of smoking can be catastrophic, and affects the oral cavity in many ways.

The most common problems are halitosis (bad breath), staining, increased likelihood of developing periodontal disease (gum disease) and, most importantly, mouth cancer or throat cancer.

Mouth cancer is becoming more common in women than men, and over 4,000 new cases are being diagnosed every year.

If you are concerned about anything sinister in your mouth contact your nearest dental centre and make an appointment.

And one final piece of advice – remember to brush twice daily with fluoride toothpaste, clean in-between with interdental aids such as floss or brushes, and visit the dentist regularly.

● **Big Cig outstays his welcome at HMS Nelson**

Deaths

Rear Admiral J Phillip Edwards CB LVO. Joined training ship HMS Conway aged 15. Joined the RN Engineering College in Plymouth 1945 where he was awarded the King's Sword. Early ships included King George VI, Zodiac, Cadiz, Vengeance and 1949 joined the flagship of the East Indies fleet, Mauritius. Temporary first lieutenant for anti-insurgent patrol in the Johore River. 1953 played for RN rugby team but a knee injury cut short his sporting career. Served in a battleship, aircraft carrier, two cruisers, four destroyers, a frigate and was Commander (Engineering) on board HMV Britannia for which he was awarded an LVO. Two-year exchange with Royal Canadian Navy. 1971 Deputy Director of the RN College, Greenwich then Assistant Director of Engineering at Bath. Whilst captain of RNB Portland in 1980 he was made Aide-de-Camp to the Queen and promoted to Flag Rank. 1981-83 Rear-Admiral and Director General of Fleet Support; retiring 1983 he was awarded a CB. Later Domestic Bursar of Wadham College, Oxford and Development Director. December 12. Aged 87.

Cdr Peter 'Roddy' Elias DSC. Trained as an Observer, and in 1941 flew two sorties totalling nine hours in Swordfish of 810 NAS from the Ark Royal. The first sortie he found Bismarck and the second he witnessed the attack by Swordfish torpedo-bombers. He was awarded a DSC for his gallantry, daring and skill in the operations, particularly in navigation. Later he flew from converted merchant ships and once crashed into the sea. Post war he qualified as a pilot and flew a range of aircraft; promoted to commander aged 34 and retired 1971. Member of ARNO. January 24. Aged 93.

John Oliver, Chaplain. National Service 1946-49 as a Writer in HMS Black Swan (Far East). Following ordination in 1956 he was curate in London before re-joining the Navy as a chaplain 1961. His first appointment as a Naval Chaplain was to the 108th Minesweeper Squadron (Malta). Subsequent postings included HMS Fisguard, Arethusa, RN Engineering College, Manadon, Fearless, RNB Portsmouth and RNC Greenwich. Honorary Chaplain to the Queen 1979 till he retired in 1983. President of Penrith and District RBL and Chaplain of the Ton Class Association from 1997. February 27. His wife predeceased him February 11.

Capt David G Armytage. HMS Chichester, Boxer, Glory, Albion, Harrier, Hornet, Eagle, MTB 5003, Jupiter, Dryad, Minerva, Mercury, NATO, MOD ACDS(P) and DNW. February 8. Aged 85.

Capt John A P Fuery. HMS Argonaut, Jupiter, Neptune, Vulcan, Repulse, Dolphin, MOD Bath, MOD Naval Secretary, DG Ships and CSSE. February 22. Aged 79.

Cdr Frank Bromilow. HMS Ocean, President, Seahawk, Heron, Gannet, RNB Victory, RM Condor, 812 and 849 NAS, HMAS Sydney, SA Lima, MOD DNSY, DIS and DNTWP. February 23. Aged 92.

Cdr P A 'Tony' Hardie RD RNR. After National Service 1955-57 he joined Tay Division RNR, commanding it 1975-78; he also commanded Division minesweeper HMS Montrose. January 31. Aged 82.

Lt Cdr Roy Francis entered RN as a midshipman 1939 and was aboard the Manchester in the Med in 1941 when she was hit by the first aerial torpedo launched by the Germans. Transferred to Duke of York which took Churchill to meet Roosevelt after the attack on Pearl Harbour. As a sub-lieutenant he joined Edinburgh in 1942, and was rescued when the ship (carrying four tons of gold) was sunk by the Germans in the Barents Sea on Convoy QP11. Reassigned to Wavenny he took part in Op Torch (North Africa landings), then Papua. Moved to boom defence vessels and commanded HMS Barndale in trials 1949 then two years clearing mines off Sierra Leone. 1953 he helped rescue Ullapool's fishing fleet that had been washed up onto the shores of Loch Broom, refloating 24 boats. Left the Navy in 1956. January 26. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Gerald F Arnold RNRV. 817, 826 and 860 NAS. January 12.

Lt Cdr Edwin J Dobinson. HMS Eagle, Blake, Kent, RNAS Portland and 737, 820, 826, 846 NAS. January 12.

Lt Cdr Timothy F Price. HMS Euryalus, Terror, Eagle, Nelson and Excellent. February 22.

Lt Cdr Derrick M Rouse. HMS Heron, Daedalus, Seahawk, Falcon, Peregrine, President, Victorious, 800 NAS and NATO. February 18. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr Robert M Sorsbie. HMS Chilcompton, Grafton, Chillingham, Carysfort, Hermes, Sea Eagle, Victory RNB and MOD Director Naval Recruiting. January 29. Aged 83.

Lt Cecil 'Tug' Wilson. Served on MTBs in WW2 and went on to become an instructor at York Sea Cadets, spending 60 years teaching youngsters naval skills, ending up as First Lieutenant. Honoured by Childline in 2002, the Lord Lieutenant of York in 2003 and received an MBE in 2004. January 30. Aged 92.

Lt Clifford V Gould. 837 and 796 NAS, HMS Glory and RNAS St Merryn. January 26. Aged 91.

Lt Arthur W Siddle RNRV. 710, 786, 822, 823 and 886 NAS. February 13.

Lt Michael S Thomas. 706, 796, 814, 820, 825 and 849B NAS, also HMS Bulwark, Albion, Victorious, Hermes and Eagle. January 15.

Sub Lt Clive W Lester RNRV. HMS Jasper and Niger. February 14. Aged 87.

Lawrence Hogben meteorologist. Born Auckland but awarded Rhodes Scholarship to New College, Oxford in 1938, where his studies were interrupted by the war. Recruited into the RN as an instructor-lieutenant. After RNC Greenwich he spent three years in HMS Sheffield as an intelligence officer, radar officer and meteorologist. Joined newly-established Royal New Zealand Navy in 1941. January 20. Aged 98.

John G Houghton Fleet Chief. Served 1953-78 HMS Ceres, Tyne, Culdrose, Bramcote, Ranpura, Brawdy, Acute, Victorious, Troubridge, Palliser, Keppel, (Rosyth), Bellerophon and Hampshire also Excellent, Vernon and Devonport. February 5. Aged 78.

Don 'Gus' Crews CPO Survey Recorder. Served 1944-67 at TS Arethusa, St George (Isle of Man) and Ganges. From 1946 he served HMS Wakeful, Triumph, Pembroke, Dampier (twice), Pembroke (Chatham twice), Scott, Vidal, SML 25, Dalrymple, Cook, Shackleton. Inshore Survey Squadron Echo, Enterprise and Egeria and finally Hecate 1965-67. August 18 2014 at Pembroke House. Aged 84.

Douglas 'Doug' Bedford AB. Served 1946-58 HMS Duke of York, Adamant, Amethyst, MTB 5517, Perseus, Excellent, Saintes and Armada; played water polo for RN. HMS Saintes Association. December 19. Aged 85.

Gerry 'George' Scott. Served 1963-73 HMS Lincoln, Lynx, Wotton, Lowestoft and Ganges. HMS Lowestoft Association. January 6. Aged 68.

Victor 'Vic' Tunstall, PO FAA. Served HMS Daedalus, Ark Royal and Illustrious. January 9 in Little Rock, Arkansas, USA. Aged 62.

Raymond 'Andy' Anderson A/PO. Served 1971-93 HMS Ganges, Charybdis, Sultan, Centurian, Tartar, Vernon, Excellent, Raleigh, Sheffield (Falklands '82), HMS Nelson, Fort Southwick, CinC Nav Home and HMS Gloucester. February 5. Aged 59.

Ronald 'Ron' Mitchell LAM(O). Served 1956-68 HMS Ganges, Lossiemouth, Brawdy, Daedalus and Yeovilton, also 848 NAS (59-61) including Bulwark and last commission on board Victorious. February 18. Aged 73.

Sgt George Frank Francis RM. Served 1938-47 HMS Eagle and as cox'n in D-Day landing craft. Member of Mount Maunganui RSA (Returned Services Association). March 6 in New Zealand. Aged 95.

Jimmy 'Topsy' Turner, Cook. Served in Falklands Conflict on board SS Uganda; also Zulu, Bristol, Cochrane, Rooke and HMNB Faslane. As a civilian was Head Chef at 'The Pink Palace' (BBC Newcastle). February 7. Aged 54.

Graham Bowles, radioman and diver, 1958-1968, HMS Woodbridge Haven, Blackpool, Vigilant, Brave Borderer, Venus, Verulam, Kirkliston. October 15. age 74.

Frederick 'Fred' Todd Stoker Mechanic. Served 1947-54 in HMS Liverpool (51-52), Duke of York and Boxer. 1981-91 Royal Observer Corps. HMS Liverpool Association. December 15. Aged 85.

William 'Bill' Parkinson OD RR3 on board HMS Cheviot 1949 and member of the association. January 16.

Royal Naval Association

Cdre F D 'Derek' Patterson CBE RD RNR. Initially FAA 1942 but contracted scarlet fever whilst under training in Detroit. Went to sea as an OS in the RNRV and commissioned as a sub-lieutenant 1944. Qualified as Flight Direction Officer, he joined HMS Queen. Saw action in strikes off Norway and on Russian convoys. Also served Daedalus, St Vincent, Dauntless, King Alfred, Heron and Harrier; demobbed 1946. RNRV at HMS Calliope 1956 then Fourth Division 1964. Captain from 1969-72 then Commodore of the RNR. Awarded CBE 1975. Scottish Chairman of King George's Fund for Sailors, and on the General Council of the Sea Cadets Association. President of Eastbourne RNA from 1995. December 19. Aged 91.

William Taft, Chief Mechanician. Served 1938-60 HMS Kent and Victorious, Arctic Convoys and Christmas Island. Past chairman of the Burma Star Association (Plymouth branch) and first Naval mentor for HMS Raleigh New Entries. Saltash RNA. February 14. Aged 97.

Charlton J Innes Chief Sto/Electrician. Served WW2 aboard HMS Naiad and survived when she was torpedoed by U-boat. Trustee of Sunderland RNA. January 8. Aged 96.

Walter 'Wally' Smith. Sunderland branch. January 8. Aged 92.

Thomas Stallard, Yeoman. Served 1947-60. Served in HMS Cleopatra, Swiftsure, Forth, Glory and past standard bearer for HMS Glory Association. 21 years in Folkestone RNA, ten as chairman. January 17. Aged 84.

Michael 'Mick' Charlesworth CERA. Served 1949-63 as Artificer Apprentice (Series 7) September 1949. Served in HMS Fisgard, Caledonia, Comus, Brocklesby, Osprey, Hogue, Loch Killisport and Albion. Bridlington RNA and the Magnificent Seven Artificer Apprentices. Ex-major and Harbourmaster of Bridlington. January 31. Aged 82.

Ronald 'Ron' Cooper. HMS Europa, Pointer, Tana, Gambia and Montclare. Full member of Cheshunt RNA. January 13.

Patrick Kemp. Associate member Cheshunt branch. January 16.

Peter Harry Nelson Bishop, Torpedoman. Served 1943-46 on coastal forces seaward defence boats. Keen golfer and one-time captain of Epsom golf club. Margate RNA. January 22. Aged 91.

Winifred Margaret Rowlands (nee Lewis) WRNS Supply(V). Served 1942-46 at Blundellsands, Milford Haven and Bristol. Member of WRNS Association and Llandudno RNA. January. Aged 92.

Gordon Ward RM. Served 1942-46 HMS Clare. Full member of Llandudno branch. January. Aged 92.

Gordon Macrow PO REL. Served 1942-46 joining as a Radio Mech/Air. Served HMS Raleigh, Ariel, Daedalus, Activity and post-war HMS Golden Hind. Member of Dartford RNA 1966, transferring 1979 to the Guildford branch (full life membership in 1988) then Bexhill branch from 2002. February 11. Aged 91.

Archibald Ian Davies. Served 20 years as an officer with TS Queen Elizabeth Sea Cadets. Long-term member of City of Glasgow RNA and Mountain Rescue Team. Aged 67.

Roger 'Noddy' Newman Elec Artificer. HMS Fisgard Series 36 1959 then served Collingwood, Diana, Bellerophon, Aurora, RN Trials Unit (RNTU) Aberport, Intrepid, Brereton, Coventry and Defiance. HMS Coventry Association, Fisgard Association and RNA. February 13. Aged 72.

George Charles Williams RM. Ran away as a young teenager to serve in Merchant Navy during WW2 then joined Royal Marines in 1948 and served for nine years in Malaya, Borneo and other conflicts. RNA HQ Roll and RMA HQ Roll. January 21. Aged 88.

Molly Hickie (nee Willing) L/Wren. Served 1943-47 HMS Kestrel (RNAS Worthy Down), Royal Arthur (Skegness) then Beehive. Joined NP1749 in Hamburg. Before the outbreak of war Molly was in Germany working as a governess and she saw the 1936 Berlin Olympics; the family got her to Ostende where she had to spend the night sleeping on the beach as she was too late for the ferry. Founder member of Bexhill branch. February 17. Aged 100.

F 'Bill' Cotton, Seaman. Joined Ganges 1936 and served in various ships in WW2 in the Battle of the Atlantic. Market Harborough RNA. February. Aged 92.

Bernard 'Bernie' Gould, AB. Served on corvettes, in particular HMS Launceston Castle, and left RN 1950. Social Secretary for RBL, Staple Hill, Bristol and founder member of South Gloucestershire RNA. January 11. Aged 88.

Graham Miles Belsey FAA. Served 1944-47. Met his wife-to-be (a Bletchley Park Wren) at HMS Royal Arthur. Joined Hemel Hempstead RNA then moved to Beaminstor and transferred to the Bridport branch, where he held various offices including vice chairman. Life Member and made a Life Vice President in 2012, with his wife Betty were joint Shipmates of the Year in 2012. February 26. Aged 88.

Fleet Air Arm Association

James 'Jim' Bremner AA1(AE). Served 1955-85, HMS Fulmar (No1 MU), Nuthatch, Gannet, Daedalus, NAMDU, Ark Royal, Fulmar, Heron, ASUCO, Hermes, Osprey, RAF Watton, President and RN/RM Careers; 807, 890, 771 and 831 NAS.

Swap Draft

AB (EW) 1 Harris working on HMS Sutherland EW Dept. Remaining time on draft 24 months. Wanting any EW Portsmouth-based draft. [Marvin.](mailto:Harris841@mod.uk)

Hanworth branch. January 24. Aged 80.

Ernie Coppard. NA1(AH). Served 1944-48. HMS Daedalus and RNAS Ford. Transferred to Aircrow, trained as navigator. Joined RAF and navigated Canberras before working for civilian airlines. Kent branch, Ramsgate RNA and Channel Dash Association. January 21. Aged 88.

David Hinge NAM. Served 1949-1954. Daedalus branch. January.

Adam McGregor CAF(A). Served 1939-51. HMS Victorious, Indomitable, Hero, Nabcatcher (MONAB), Daedalus, Vulture and Condor; 827 and 759 NAS. Daedalus branch. January.

John G Stephenson LAM(E). Served 1943-1946. HMS Gosling, Daedalus, Jackdaw, Waxwing, Phoenix, and Sphinx. Birmingham branch. January 10. Aged 90.

Joyce Fyles (nee Broadhurst) Wren AM(E). Served 1948-51 in the FAA. HMS Heron and Fulmar. Kent branch. February 16. Aged 85.

Association of RN Officers/RNOC

Capt Gerrard J M Andrewes LVO. HMV Britannia, HMS Dryad, Fulmar, Nelson, FO Portsmouth, DGNM, DNOT, Fleet Work Study. January 7. Aged 85.

Cdr John K Conder. HMS Ashanti, Malcolm, Norfolk, Arethusa, Excellent, President, St Vincent, CINCNAVHOME, Director Naval Warfare, National Defence College and Service Attaché Stockholm. December 28. Aged 79.

Cdr Paul A Wearmouth. HMS Churchill, London, Lowestoft, Collingwood, Northolt, Radio HQ Forest Moor, FOST Staff and Fleet Engineer Portsmouth staff. January 15. Aged 68.

Cdr Robert P Clarke. HMS Devonshire, Armada, Undine, Cumberland, Cheviot, Chevron, Wakeful, St Vincent, Excellent, RNC Greenwich. December 25. Aged 86.

Lt Cdr Peter J Young. Joined as a seaman radar plotter 1963 and served 34 years in HMS Tiger, Zulu, Apollo, Berwick, Intrepid, London and Rame Head, also Dryad and Centurion, then for DNR. Member of RNOC. January 18. Aged 68.

Lt Cdr Timothy W Gudgeon. HMS Caprice, Loch Fada, Hogue, Superb, Zest, Cochrane, Heron, Fulmar, Goldcrest and Merlin; also 891 and 807 NAS. January 6. Aged 85.

Lt Cdr Maxwell H Simpson LVO. HMS Zest, Sydney, Daedalus, Siskin, Merlin, Nabcatcher and 817 Sqn RAN. December 22. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Raymond S Sutton. HMS Manxman, Belfast, Vanguard, Lanka, Marlborough, Maidstone, Pembroke, Caledonia and St Angelo. January 19. Aged 93.

Maj A J 'Tony' Parker RM. 42 Cdo. RM Plymouth & Deal, HMS Terror and ATURM. January 22. Aged 91.

Sub Lt Jack V Taylor. HMS Ocean, Eagle, Plymouth and Termagent. January 21. Aged 89.

Cdr James S Carter. HMS President, Seahawk, Vernon, Eagle, Terror, Saker, Relentless, Crossbow, NATO & Director General Weapons. January 28. Aged 91.

Reunions

April

HMS Illustrious Association (Northern) Reunion at Tiffany's Hotel, Blackpool April 17-20. Includes half board accommodation, Gala Dinner, AGM, coach trip to Lake District with short cruise on Lake Windermere. Three nights £144pp, two nights £114pp, gala dinner only £35. Contact Isle of Wight Tours at enquiries@iowtours.com or tel 01983 405116.

May

HMS Hood Association. Service of Commemoration at St John the Baptist Church, Boldre near Lymington at 1100 on May 17. Contact Chairman Keith Evans on 01428 642122.

RNH Haslar Reunion May 1-3 at Thorngate Halls, Gosport for all who worked at Haslar. Friday night reception, visit to Haslar on Saturday morning with a disco in the evening and Shep Woolley in concert Sunday afternoon. Contact Lynda Cash at haslar1@msn.com or tel 01942 810314.

HMS Wizard & Cadiz Association reunion at the Inglewood Palm Hotel, Torquay May 8-11. Membership open to all who have served in Battle-class V & W destroyers and Type 15 frigates. Contact Jim Watkins at jimandleah@hotmail.co.uk, tel 01872 274419 or write to 10 Trewidgen Close, Truro, Cornwall TR1 1LN.

HMS Illustrious Association (Southern) reunion at Holiday Inn Garden Court, Sandy, Bedford May 15-18. Includes half board accommodation, Gala Dinner, AGM, coach trips to Bletchley Park and Shuttleworth Collection. Three nights £189pp, two nights £139pp, gala dinner only £37.50. Contact Isle of Wight Tours at enquiries@iowtours.com or tel 01983 405116.

HMS Hood Association AGM at 1630 and 40th Reunion dinner 1900 at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth May 23. Church service at St Ann's, HM Dockyard, Portsmouth at 1000 May 24. Contact Chairman Keith Evans on 01428 642122.

International Submariners

Lt Cdr Edgar E Day. HMS Daedalus, Victorious, Fulmar, RM Condor, MOD DGA(N), DNAV and MOD(PE). February. Aged 87.

Lt Cdr Roy W Francis. HMS Barsound, Barneath, Barcote, Tagarin and Neptune. February. Aged 92.

Cdr P A Hardie RD RNR. Tay Division RNR. February. Aged 82.

Capt Eric J Oatley RM. HMS Bulwark, HQ 3 Cdo, 42 Cdo, RM Eastney, RNC Greenwich, DRORM and HQ RMR. February 7. Aged 85.

Capt Peter J Shaw. Cadet at Dartmouth 1938-41. War service 1942-45 in HMS Kenya (Russia/Malta convoys), Resolution, Quadrant, Berwick, Kelvin (Navigator D-Day, passage Winston Churchill to France June 6 1944, liberation Aegean). CO of HMLC(I)377, Secret Intelligence Service Germany/Italy, HMS Corunna, Chevron and Whirlwind, Naval Instructor RAF Cranwell, CO of HMS Venus, Carron and Vigilant, Portsmouth Command Security Officer, Polaris Systems Officer, SHAPE, XO RNC Greenwich, DA The Hague and QHM and Capt of the Port Plymouth and Chatham. February 10. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr Michael A Stockton. HMS Mercury, Heron, Hermes, Dartington, MOD Weapons Department and DIS, FONAC Staff. February 4. Aged 89.

Submariners Association

P 'Peter' Swift MEM. Submarine Service 1966-73 in Walrus, Sealion, Porpoise and Oracle. Blackpool and Fylde branch. Aged 68.

Lt R J 'Roger' Whitby. Submarine Service 1981-88 in Otus. Offer and Opportune. Dolphin branch. Aged 58.

T 'Tom' Kimmitt CME(M). Submarine Service in Revenge, Repulse and Renown. Scotland North East branch.

J W 'Jim' Appleton Tel T/O. Submarine Service 1944-46 in H34, O10, Porpoise, Trenchant and Tapir, Australia branch. Aged 89.

F 'Frank' Sharp FCOEA. Submarine Service 1958-77 in Cachalot and Dreadnought. Dolphin branch. Aged 82.

B 'Brian' Edwards PO MEM. Submarine Service 1965-86 in Fin whale, Walrus, Cachalot and Opportune. Northern Ireland branch. Aged 87.

A H 'Alan' Scarr Sto/Mech. Submarine Service 1945-49 in Tresspasser, Thorough, Telemachus, Artemis and Auriga. Birmingham branch. Aged 87.

C 'Colin' Lee AB RP2. Submarine Service 1952-55 in Tradewind, Sidon, Scorchor and Totem. Barrow-in-Furness branch. Aged 81.

A 'Tony' Sainty AB. Submarine Service 1966-71 in Warspite and Churchill. Barrow-in-Furness branch. Aged 69.

M G 'Malc' Douce CPO WEM(R). Submarine Service 1967-82 in Resolution and Oberon. Lincoln branch. Aged 72.

J 'Joe' Ryrie ME1. Submarine Service 1947-53 in Trump, Talent, Sturdy, Alaric, Sportsman and Tally-Ho. Merseyside branch. Aged 86.

Association Congress in Portsmouth May 18-21. Main hotel will be the Marriott, Port Solent. Contact [ian.congress2015@virginmedia.com</](mailto:ian.congress2015@virginmedia.com)



● CPO Leiba feels the pain

Leiba earns first RN medal

THE Royal Navy has won its first medal at the World Indoor Rowing Championships, courtesy of veteran CPO Collin Leiba.

CPO Leiba picked up a bronze medal at the contest in Boston, where he rowed 2km close to his personal best with a time of 6min 27.9sec.

"It was very rewarding, once the pain subsided," said CPO Leiba, who is the UK record holder over 500m and 1,000m in the men's heavyweight 50 plus age group.

RN team manager Paul Winton added: "The medal was just reward for his endeavor and application and he has another title to add to his Mr Plymouth 1992 bodybuilding accolade."

A team of 15 RN indoor rowers took part in Boston, with many posting season-best times.

CPO Leiba, who has rowed for the Navy for five years, was aiming for a new personal best at the English Championships at the end of March and this month competes in the Inter-Service Indoor Rowing Championships.

He won the Men's hwt 50+ Gold medal at the British Indoor Rowing Championships in 2013 and was fourth at the World Championships in 2014.

Are you up for a climb?

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Mountaineering Club is holding a climbing contest next month.

Open to all abilities, the contest takes place at The Quay Climbing Centre in Exeter on May 13.

The categories of competition are: Novice top rope, Under-25 men, Men's open, Women and Veterans (over 35) lead climb, best guest (MOD/Military).

Registration is from 8.30am with the cost £5 for members but free for those taking part in the novice category.

For details contact Duncan. turner299@mod.uk or visit www.RNRMCC.org.uk

So close for Navy women

THE Royal Navy netball team reached the final of the Inter-Services contest at HMS Nelson.

Unfortunately the women in dark blue lost the match but still have reason to celebrate as seven of their number were selected for a Combined Services side.

Those selected are: MA Ayton, MA Albutt, LStd Rowe, NN Wrigley, AET Kaptein, Wtr Bailey and LP Phillips.

Before the Inter-Services, the Navy women attended a training camp in Guernsey and beat the top team, Guernsey Panthers A.

The RNNA has embarked on a five-year development strategy to grow talent in RN netball such that it has a sustainable squad prepared for the IS competition.

No doubt about it, they are good



● Capt Henry Duffy presents the trophy to the HMS Ocean team
Picture: Craig Keating

NOVICE boxers representing the Royal Navy in the South West have gone head to head in the ring at the Western Region and Fleet Air Arm Development Boxing Championships.

The event, held on the historic Quarterdeck at Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC), featured nine bouts at differing weights, including one female bout.

HMS Ocean fielded the biggest team with boxers from the ship taking part in seven of the nine bouts and winning six.

The home team had five boxers in the final with two winners. HMS Drake and the Naval Air Stations at Yeovilton and Culdrose were also represented.

Event organiser LPT Keir Woodhead, who works at BRNC, said: "There was a really good standard of boxing considering that most of those taking part were complete novices."

"Many had never been in the ring before. I thought the best fight of the night was the women's bout which saw LWtr Nikki Aston, from HMS Ocean, take on OC Cheryl Goodwin, representing BRNC, in a bout that went the whole three rounds. There was huge input from the coaches of all the boxers taking part which contributed to the success

of the evening. Each boxer gave everything they could in every single bout."

A total of 300 spectators enjoyed the evening, which included a dinner. As well as OC Goodwin, the home team were represented by OCs Joseph Holt, Sam Hibberd and Andjii Hladum, an international cadet from the Ukraine.

LPT Woodhead said: "The boxers' overall sports ability really helped to put on a good show. For example OC Goodwin is a basketball player with the potential to represent the Royal Navy, while OCs Hibberd and Steward are both rugby players. This level of fitness made it tougher for those who had a bit more experience in the ring."

Winners from this tournament will now go forward to represent the western region later in the year pitting east, west and north against each other, from which boxers will be chosen to fight for the whole Royal Navy.

Capt Henry Duffy, the Commanding Officer of BRNC, said: "This was the first boxing show hosted at the college during my tenure in command. It was a superb evening of competitive sport and I'd like to place on record my thanks to the organisers and congratulate those taking part for their commitment."

Road racing team are raring to go

Grand plans for heroes

A MOTOR-RACING team founded to help injured Servicemen plans to expand this year.

True Heroes Racing has been competing in the MCE Insurance British Superbike Championship support classes for two seasons now with double amputee Murray Hambro and a team of injured Service personnel.

This year the team will be competing in the Ducati TriOptions Cup on a fleet of new Ducati 899 Panigale, provided by their sponsor, Laguna Motorcycles of Kent.

The 2014 teaming of Hambro and severely deaf Luke Smith will be boosted by recently-retired soldier Dave Mackay.

Hambro said: "I'm really looking forward to my third season in BSB and am particularly excited by the new challenges the Ducati TriOptions Cup will bring. It's great to again see the team grow and recruit new members."

Founder and team manager WO2 Phil Spencer, based at the Royal Navy Flight Safety Centre at RNAS Yeovilton, said: "Hopefully we will continue to offer more opportunities for injured Service personnel and also continue to inspire others."

Smith added: "I'm delighted to be able to continue to be a part of True Heroes Racing. I still can't believe Phil offered me the opportunity to compete at the BSB last year, let alone for a second season, it's really helped me gain a strong focus."

Mackay said: "I'm really pleased to become a part of True Heroes Racing. Being able to assist them to grow and offer more opportunities for injured Service personnel to be involved in BSB is great."

■ www.trueheroesracing.co.uk



● Sgt Stevie Elliott in action on the track at Oulton Park last season

Picture: Jacks-Snaps

deliver training in all aspects of riding and racing a motorbike.

The skills are at first delivered in the classroom then practised and hopefully mastered on track. It is hoped to get the team up to speed with the next three more advanced levels that the CSS provide.

The RRT continues to race and compete in the televised British Military Inter-Services Championship with the UK's fastest Club Racing Organisation; Thundersport GB.

The riders compete in both the RN Championship and

Inter-Services Championship (team and individual). The team also compete in a memorial race hosted by North Gloucester at Thruxton. This race is held in the memory of late PO Jamie Adam, a Royal Naval Aircraft Technician who used to race for the Senior Service.

Last season was only the third year of the RRT existence and in this short time it has topped the Inter-Services Championship, had a rider race and held its own with the world's elite at the Isle of Man TT, ran grassroots and RRT training days and appeared

on BT Sports TV Show *Moto GP Tonight*.

2014 Team Awards:
Inter-Services Team Championship: Third place.
Royal Navy Champion: Sgt Lee Howarth, RM Poole; Second, Sgt Stevie Elliott, 1 AGRM; Third, Sgt Stevie Bryson, RM Poole.

Royal Marines Champion: Sgt Howarth; Second, Sgt Elliott; Third, Sgt Bryson.

Jamie Adam Memorial Race: Sgt Howarth.
Brands Hatch Matt Page Trophy: Sgt Elliott



● The RN netball team in action against the RAF at HMS Nelson

England duty

A ROYAL Marine has been chosen to represent England at boxing after a successful bout at an England Boxing Talent weekend.

L/Cpl Jones, of 42 Commando Royal Marines, held his own against an Irish boxer in the 81kg category and went on to win.

But it was also an excellent event for coach POPT Paul Ormston, from HMS Collingwood, who was taking part as a coach for the first time.

During the weekend the England team secured a strong win of 6-1.



Out to Africa for vital winter training camp

A TEAM from the Royal Navy Polo Association took part in a pre-season winter training camp in South Africa.

Under the watchful eye of former South African polo captain Rod Guttridge, the team of five were put to the test at the Franshoek Polo School a few hours south of Johannesburg.

Training started very early to make the best use of the cool mornings.

After midday tabletop coaching and video analysis the team mounted again late afternoon as temperatures reduced for practice matches known as chukkas.

Training in the second week went up several

gears building on what had already been practised. Preparations were now focussed on positional play and set pieces ready for the big match on the final day against riders from Polo Africa.

The match was very competitive with the RN team emerging 8-6 victors against a much better team, fully demonstrating the benefit of all the training.

Promotion as Services take title

UNITED Services rugby team clinched the Hampshire One title and promotion to the London League.

Services scored seven tries on their way to a 49-19 victory over Farnborough, meaning their seventeenth straight success of the season ended a 15-year wait for promotion.

Graham Butterworth, Keith Molyneux, Jimmy Taylor, Luke Peters, Sam Porter and Tom Blewitt – with two – scored tries for Services, while Ben Smith produced a faultless kicking display.

Services is the only club in the country to have achieved maximum points possible (four for a win and one bonus point for scoring four tries in a game in each of the matches).

■ Season's report in next month's Navy News

Saddlers unseated

THE Royal Navy Rugby League team sailed through the first round of the Ladbrokes Challenge Cup with a comprehensive victory over Saddleworth Rangers.

Std Ratu Kurasasa put the first points on the board and was quickly followed by AET Tommy Wilkinson. AB(WS) Ryan Matthews converted.

The visitors pegged the Navy back with a try before Kurasasa's second try of the game saw the home team enter the break 14-4.

Mne Lewis Cooper marked his full debut with a try shortly after the break and again AB(WS) Matthews converted.

Another fumbled kick-through gave the RN their next score, with stand-off CPO Kev Borwood following up his own kick by crashing over for the try.

Rangers hit back with a try after 63 minutes but any thoughts of a late comeback were dashed as AET Wilkinson released Std Kurasasa for his hat-trick.

The final score was 32-14.

Protector's crew sail through race

With very little training an amazing 31 per cent of HMS Protector's ship's company competed in the Stanley Half Marathon in the Falkland Islands.

A week before the race few of them knew anything about the event as they were 700 miles away in South Georgia.

But as soon they made landfall 22 personnel signed up for the bracing race where temperatures peaked at a sunny 13° Celsius.

With 13.1 miles ahead it became clear that much of the course was going to be off road, which tested many of the less experienced runners.

But first home in an impressive 1 hour 26 minutes was Mne Griff Griffiths, who said: "The change in terrain from road to gravel to sand then back to road made it more challenging because you couldn't get into your usual running pace as you would have if it was all on road."

The first female from the ship to finish was Surg Lt Cdr Alison Dewynter in 1 hour 32 minutes, which was also a new female course record.

Of equal importance were those who had never run a half marathon before.

AB J Norton finished in just

under two hours and said: "The atmosphere was fantastic."

"Everybody was in good spirits throughout the race, and it was good to see other members of the ship's company at the finish line cheering everybody on."

While AB Parker, who finished in 2 hours 5 minutes, said, "I'd definitely do it again. I'd like to prepare for more than a week before hand though!"

AB Short, who ran the race with AB Claire Start, said afterwards, "We entered because running the Port Stanley half marathon is an opportunity that doesn't come around often, and it is a unique event, being the most southerly half marathon in the world. Not many people can say they've done that."

"With no training before hand and having never run that distance, we both found it challenging but very rewarding."

Those who took part from HMS Protector were:

Surg Lt Cdr Dewynter, Lt Hastings, Lt Barrowclough, Lt Butler, Sub Lt Daniels, CPO Pearce, CPO(HM) Birch, PO(HM) Morris, LS(HM) David, LS(HM) Brammer, LS(SEA) Kivell, AB(SC) Norton, AB(SEA) Turnbull, AB(SEA) Roberts, AB(SEA) Start, AB(SEA) Short, AB(SEA) Bell (RNR), AB(CS) Jackson, AB(HM) Parker, Mne Howell, Mne David, Mne Griffiths.



● Personnel from HMS Protector ran the Stanley Half Marathon



● Mne Griff Griffiths was the first of Protector's ship's company to complete the Stanley Half Marathon Pictures: LET(WE) Craig Desborough

Canoe polo players glide to Inter-Service victory

THE Royal Navy were victorious at this year's Inter-Service canoe polo championships, despite the other two Services fielding their strongest teams in a number of years, writes CPO 'General' Patten of HMS Raleigh.

Canoe polo is a fast game where two teams of five players compete on a polo pitch, usually a swimming pool, to score in their opponent's goal suspended two metres above the water.

Each Service submits three teams: a men's A team, men's B team and a women's team. The points from all three go towards the competition for the Inter-Service trophy, with medals for the three highest individually

placed teams in both the men's and women's events.

The Royal Navy's A team and the RAF's A team were identified as the strongest. The Army's A team only just managed to beat the Navy's B team 1-0; and both B teams were held to a draw. Pride and confidence were restored when the Navy's B team comprehensively defeated the RAF's B team by seven goals.

Meanwhile, the Navy women's team brushed aside an under-strength Army team and beat the RAF 4-0, with goals from Lt Helen Johnson (HMS Somerset) and Lt Kirsty Wallace (HMS Collingwood). By the time the final game between the RAF and Navy's A teams was played,

the Inter-Service trophy was already in the dark blue bag.

The RAF took an early lead but a quick goal on the break by Cpl Hoyes (RM Poole) soon restored the balance. At half time it was two goals apiece.

The Senior Service side edged ahead in the second half and the RAF were tempted out from their defensive positions which allowed the Navy side to dash the RAF's hopes as the Senior Service side went two goals up thanks to departing polo secretary, LA(SE) "Taff" Dolan (RNAS Yeovilton). The final score was 4-2 to the Navy.

For more information contact your units PTI or email membership@rnka.co.uk

Shorts

■ HMS Collingwood won the Norfolk Trophy for the second year running.

LPT Anthony 'Scouse' Carley took over the running of the Fleet-wide trophy – a 100x1-mile relay – at the end of last year.

The trophy is the shore-side adaptation of the Mike Till Trophy challenge run in memory of the sailor who died while serving in HMS Sheffield during the Falklands Conflict in 1982.

HMS Collingwood's team won in six hours, 41 minutes, and 43 seconds to win the trophy and raise £519.68 for The Rainbow Centre.

■ HMS Dauntless's football team notched up a 4-0 victory over Everton Under 18s and coaches team during a visit to Kuwait.

The match at the Premier Sport Academy was a competitive affair with Dauntless scoring first through ETME Smith with ETME Charlton adding a second shortly before half time.

Further goals by AB Clark and LCIS Clark gave Dauntless victory and saw them maintain their unbeaten run.

■ THE Royal Navy Volleyball Association competed at the Australian Defence Force Championships in New South Wales.

A squad of 20 travelled Down Under with the first competition – King and Queen of the Beach – held at Jervis Bay.

Eight of the RN squad took part with one making it to the final where Capt David Childs finished in second spot.

The main indoor contest saw international matches played between the Australian Navy and the RN. Both the RN men and women squads dominated, not dropping a single set. AB MJ Masi was selected for the tournament's super six squad.

If you are interested in joining the squad details can be found in the [PDEV portal/volleyball](http://PDEV.portal/volleyball)

■ THE ROYAL NAVY Karting Championship starts at the end of the month with round one in Suffolk.

Open to all personnel in the Navy and Royal Marines, the second rounds take place in Dorset and Northamptonshire in June and October.

Registrations are now open for all three rounds. Email info@rnkc.co.uk For news and updates, 'like' the championship on Facebook (Royal Navy Karting Championship) and on Twitter @thernkc

■ SO CLOSE yet so far was the theme for the Navy at the 2015 Inter-Service Squash Championships hosted by the Army in Aldershot.

The Army took the title with a 4-1 victory in the rounds. Next year's championships will take place at RAF Halton on February 3-4.

■ THREE Royal Navy powerlifters enjoyed success at the National Championships.

LPT Andy Davey from RNAS Culdrose won the U90kg bench press with a lift of 162.5kg to qualify for the World Championships in June. He also finished sixth in the deadlift with a lift of 245kg.

CPOAET Marty Parry from 820 NAS also qualified with a 235kg deadlift in the U82.5kg M1 category.

Lt M Hawkins from 829 NAS finished eighth in the U90kg bench press with 140kg and eighth in the deadlift with 240kg, two personal bests.

■ THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Triathlon Championships takes place at HMS Raleigh on May 20.

Entries close on May 13. For details and to enter visit www.tempusleisure.org.uk/navychamps.



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Ice road truckers

Navy team take honours during Swiss watch



ROYAL Navy medic Dave Potter is pictured left as he emerges from a bend on the world-famous **Cresta Run** where the Senior Service successfully regained the Inter-Service title.

Surg Lt Cdr Potter, captain of the RNRM Cresta team, posted a personal best time on his first run and went on to collect two more awards.

Reaching speeds of 80mph along the steepest ice track in the world, which is built from scratch each year, riders must balance their nerve with their ability to avoid being ejected from the track at the sharpest corner, Shuttlecock.

The Cresta is an ice run, three quarters of a mile long, that winds its way from above the 'Leaning Tower' in St Moritz down a steep gully through ten testing corners, past the tiny hamlet of Cresta, to the village of Celerina.

The total drop is 514ft and the gradient varies from 1 in 2.8 to 1 in 8.7.

After the first course, the RN had their noses in front of the Army, with further personal bests from Royal Marines Cpl Mike Starling and Lt Cdr Dave Armstrong.

The second course saw some outstanding riding from the Army riders as they attempted to close the gap, but season's best times from the experienced Cdr Angus Essenhigh and Lt Col Jamie Summers kept the Royal Navy in front.

Extremely competitive riding by the sixth man, WO1 Craig Birkby, allowed the rest of the team to continue to push for fast times, and by the end of the third course, with all six men finishing, victory belonged to the Senior Service.

Surg Lt Cdr Potter won the Lord Trenchard Trophy for the fastest individual over the three rides as well as the Auty Speed Cup for the fastest single ride.

The RNRM team had five riders in the top seven places and collected the Prince Phillip Trophy in St Moritz, Switzerland.

The Cresta has two starting points: Top and Junction. Beginners start from Junction and are encouraged to go down in a time of between 65 and 75 seconds.

In the Harland Trophy, the race for veterans and those not selected in the first six, the outstanding rider was LSC James Osborn, who had been a beginner just two weeks earlier.

He did the Submarine



● Above: RAdm Matt Parr leaps at the start of his run; Below: Cpl Mike Starling in action on the Cresta Run

Pictures: Jason Larraman, Cresta Photos



● Personnel from the RNRM Cresta team at St Moritz in Switzerland

Service proud with a display of outstanding bravery and ability. The Harland was won by Lt Cdr Andy Mills with some stylish riding.

In the Silver Spoon, the Junction race for Novices, RAdm Matt Parr held his nerve

to finish second after some navigational issues earlier in the week.

Lt Col Jani Marok RMR finished third with a display of considerable courage, posting his three fastest times ever to top a great time at St Moritz.

Taylor sews up snowboard victory

NEW captain of the RN Men's snowboard team LAET Ross Taylor led by example at the Inter-Service Championships in Meribel – winning the Overall Individual Men's gold for the fourth year running.

The team got off to a flying start, with four riders finishing in the top seven of the Snowboard-X event, with LAET Taylor adding to his gold tally.

The second event was the Parallel Slalom (PS); traditionally, the most challenging for the Navy.

Buoyed by success in the opening event, the team rose to the challenge, with four men and two women making the final cuts of 16 and eight respectively with an outstanding performance by new team rider AB Aaby Aldridge who qualified fourth.

Competition for the men was fierce, with the final battle coming down to

LAET Taylor against the Army's former GB-snowboarder Capt Si Nicholson.

The Navy beat the Army on the first of two runs, with LAET Taylor crossing the line 0.01s ahead of his opponent. The Army narrowly won the second but LAET Taylor's silver medal, coupled with the points earned by the other riders, meant that the team remained very much in overall contention with one event to go.

Competition was excruciatingly tight

for the Slopestyle with six men from both the Navy and Army making it into the final 16.

Team captain POPT Lucy McKenna and Aaby Aldridge again both qualified in the women's competition. The end result in the men's competition was a Tri-Service podium with the top RAF rider getting bronze, the Army getting silver and yet again LAET Taylor taking gold for the Navy.

POPT McKenna was able to emulate

her inspiration, GB Olympian Jenny Jones, by bringing home a bronze. Further down the men's table, the other Navy riders dominated, producing another team gold medal for Slopestyle. Coupled with their successes in earlier events, this guaranteed the men Overall Inter-Service team gold.

If you want to get involved, follow the RN Snowboard Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/groups/24572825300/?fref=ts

Hell's Gate

The Royal Navy at Gallipoli

WARSHIPS SEIZED

A 'COUP' ON THE TYNE

CONSTANTINOPLE FURIOUS

Lunchtime on August 1 1914 found Tynesiders – as with most of their fellow countrymen – gripped by war fever. Across Newcastle factory whistles sounded to mark the end of work – Saturday was a half-day. Extras were snatched out of the hands of newspaper vendors standing outside gates as employees streamed out – that very day Germany had declared war on Russia, while the French government had ordered general mobilisation. But the Armstrong Whitworth yard on the north bank of the Tyne at Elswick, a mile or so west of Newcastle's city centre, remained a hive of activity. Many of the 11,000-strong workforce stayed on to add the finishing touches to a mighty leviathan, laid down 35 months earlier.

That morning the latest of the Sultan Osman I's 12in guns – there were 14 in all, mounted in seven twin turrets – had been craned into place. In a few hours, the Crescent and Star would be hoisted for the first time. A couple of hundred yards away on the south bank of the Tyne, Turkish sailors eagerly lined the decks of the battered steamer Neshid Pasha. For five days, the 500 or so men had been stuck onboard the ship, unable to either cross the river to look around the leviathan which would soon be their home, or enjoy the sights of the great industrial powerhouse of northeastern England.

Amid the tumult of whistles blaring along the Tyne and the clatter and banging of Armstrong's shipwrights, who'd been working in 12, even 15-hour shifts to finish the 30,000-tonne battleship, 100 khaki figures moved through the shipyard, Lee Enfield rifles in hand, bayonets fixed. Ostensibly, the company of Sherwood Foresters had been ordered into the sprawling works to safeguard the super-dreadnought HMS Malaya, taking shape on one of the slipways, but still 18 months from completion. In reality, the soldiers had orders to march over the gangway to the Sultan Osman – and seize her on behalf of the British people.

While the Foresters prepared to act, the battleship's captain, Raouf Bey, was invited to the residence of the yard's director, where he was told his ship was being sequestered by the British government. Bey "took the matter in the way we hoped," a Royal Navy liaison officer reported, "though evidently he was deeply moved, and he at once telephoned the Turkish ambassador in London."

Ninety miles away across the Pennines – though without a crew waiting expectantly to join her – another mighty Turkish man o' war, the Reşadiye, was all but ready to be delivered to her owners. She too was seized.

A decade before, a senior Royal Navy observer had dismissed the Ottoman Navy as "practically non-existent." And, in the racial stereotypes prevalent at the time, the same admiral went on to dismiss the Turks in toto as a seafaring nation. "The Turk is not a sailor by instinct, neither has he any belief in Heaven's first law – order – and consequently never can become the combination of a seaman and a mechanic that goes to make the modern man of war's man."

But in the devil's tinderbox of southeast Europe in the first years of the 20th Century, Constantinople decided modern battleships might



● Men are crowded on the forecastle of HMS Queen Elizabeth – the most powerful warship in the world – off the Dardanelles

Picture: Imperial War Museum/Q 103294

help the Ottoman Empire reassert its position – particularly with Athens also eyeing up similar vessels. With two British-built dreadnoughts – the weapon of the age, in the same way that today we class nuclear powers – the Ottoman Navy would dominate the eastern Mediterranean. It was a matter of national pride – and it took a national effort to pay for them (something akin to Lord Beaverbrook's call for pots and pans in 1940). There were collections across Turkey – the 'Navy Donation Medal' was struck for those who dipped into their pockets – fund-raising drives, a media campaign urged wealthy citizens to donate huge sums, taxes were raised. In three months, Turks had accumulated £450,000 towards the cost – nearly £300m in today's money.

So it was an angry Turkish Ambassador who stormed into the Foreign Office to protest at British 'piracy'. Sir Edward Grey, the Foreign Minister, was unavailable – he had the small matter of Germany's imminent flouting of Belgian neutrality to deal with. Instead, Tewfik Pasha vented his government's displeasure at a stony-faced Foreign Office diplomat Sir Arthur Nicolson. Constantinople had paid £3m for her castle of steel – and she expected delivery. Nicolson procrastinated. With the war clouds gathering Britain could not allow a dreadnought to be sold to a foreign power. Nicolson assured the ambassador that Turkey would not lose her money. This was purely a temporary measure and his government had acted most properly – "it would have been discourteous to have taken any steps once the Turkish flag had been hoisted and a Turkish crew placed on board."

The Turks were far from assuaged, so Grey himself intervened, cabling his *chargé d'affaires* in Constantinople

I am sure Turkish Government will understand necessity for His Majesty's Government to keep all warships available in England for their own needs in this crisis.

Financial and other loss to Turkey will receive all due consideration and is subject

of sincere regret to His Majesty's Government.

By the time the telegram reached the British Embassy in Constantinople, the Ottoman Empire had already concluded a secret alliance with Berlin – and the long fuse to the Dardanelles had been lit.

KAISER'S PUPPETS

GERMANS IN FEZZES

ALL EYES ON DARDANELLES

The loss of the Sultan Osman and Reşadiye – which became His Majesty's Ships Agincourt and Erin respectively – was made good, in part, by the 'sale' of the battle-cruiser Goeben and cruiser Breslau, to the Turks after the two German warships had covered the entire length of the Mediterranean, largely evading the attention of the Royal Navy, and sailed up the Dardanelles and into Constantinople.

The Breslau became the Midilli, the Goeben the Yavuz Sultan Selim. But having lost £3m on the two requisitioned dreadnoughts, the Ottoman Empire could ill afford the Kaiser's warships. A handful of Turkish sailors joined each ship, the Turkish ensign replaced that of Germany, the crews replaced the *Matrosen's* cap with a fez. Otherwise, the ships were still German through and through, as the American Ambassador in Constantinople, Henry Morgenthau, observed:

One day the Goeben sailed up the Bosphorus, halted in front of the Russian Embassy, and dropped anchor. Then the officers and men lined the deck in full view of the enemy embassy. All solemnly removed their Turkish fezzes and put on German caps. The band played *Deutschland über Alles*, the *Watch on the Rhine*, and other German songs, the German sailors singing loudly to the accompaniment. When they had spent an hour or more serenading the

Russian Ambassador, the officers and crews removed their German caps and again put on their Turkish fezzes. The Goeben then picked up her anchor and started southward for her station, leaving in the ears of the Russian diplomat the gradually dying strains of German war songs as the cruiser disappeared down stream.

By the end of October 1914, however, encounters between the 'Turkish' warships and the Russians were far from comical. The Goeben and Breslau began to make a nuisance of themselves in the Black Sea and, in company with the Ottoman fleet, launched attacks on Russian ports in the Crimea and on the edge of the Caucasus. The Russians responded by declaring war on November 2.

An hour after first light the next day, two aged French battleships – Suffren and Vérité – and two British dreadnoughts – the battle-cruisers Indomitable and Inflexible – directed their barrels against four forts guarding the gateway to the Dardanelles: two on the peninsula, two on the shore of Asia Minor.

Through the light morning mist, a German officer watched the constant flash of muzzles. And a few seconds later, the forts at Seddulbahir and Kum Kale were shrouded by smoke and dust. The Turkish cannon were silent – the warships were nearly ten miles away and beyond their range. The barrage lasted just ten minutes. It left Seddulbahir in particular covered by an enormous white cloud which dissipated only slowly. Little damage had been caused, beyond a gunpowder store being hit. It exploded, taking an entire battery, five officers and 60 men with it.

The Turks still regard what happened that early November day as a war crime – two more days passed before London and Paris officially declared war on Constantinople.

The covetous eyes of three allied nations now focused on the capital of the Ottoman Empire – and control of the Bosphorus, gateway to the Black Sea. The Tsar's armies were involved in a life-and-death struggle with Austrian and German

forces in eastern Europe. Now the Turks weighed in, throwing their Third Army into battle in eastern Asia Minor. The Ottoman offensive was crushed, the Third Army all but wiped out at Sarikamish, but not before St Petersburg had turned to her allies for something to relieve the Turkish pressure. Perhaps, Grand Duke Nicholas – the Tsar's commander in the field – suggested France or Britain could lay on a "demonstration – either naval or military" against the Ottomans.

The request fell on fertile ground in Whitehall. The First Lord of the Admiralty – the Royal Navy's political master – was all for acceding to the Russians. For months Winston Churchill had been lobbying to deliver a swift, brutal blow against the Turks. His eyes fell upon the narrow peninsula extending into the northeastern Aegean – and the even narrower strip of water which separated it from Asia Minor.

Those waters – the Dardanelles – were just 4½ miles across at their widest point, a mere 1,500 yards at their narrowest, the Hellespont of Greek legend, by the modern port of Çanakkale. The Dardanelles stretched for around 40 miles from the tip at Cape Helles on the Aegean to the small port where the waters opened out into the Sea of Marmara: Gallipoli. From there it was a mere 125 miles to the heart of the Ottoman Empire – five or six hours' sailing.

On maps and globes it all looked so simple. "A good army of 50,000 men and sea power – that is the end of the Turkish menace," Churchill argued.

"The price to be paid in taking Gallipoli would no doubt be heavy, but there would be no more war with Turkey."

And if Britain wanted to seize the Dardanelles, so her ally France wanted to be in on the venture for she too had interests in the Middle East and had no intention of allowing London to dominate the Levant. "To witness the appearance of the English fleet alone before Constantinople," wrote Victor Augangeur, France's counterpart to Winston Churchill, would be "a very painful renunciation of our national pride and perilous to our interests."

A MONTH'S LULL

PERILS OF THE NARROWS

Despite their resolve, the forces of the two great powers were slow to gather, even slower to act. After the lightning bombardment of November 3, little had happened.

The brief barrage had served as an experiment in early 20th-Century warfare: what effect did modern shells and high explosive have on mediaeval fortresses? The lesson, apparently, was that steel and lyddite could indeed damage old masonry and silence forts.

It was the Turks, not the British and French who learned the most from the rather desultory bombardment. It proved their foes were interested in the Dardanelles – and it convinced Turkish commander Jevad Bey he needed to devote all his time and energy to improving his defences.

The Turks had taken the first steps to make the Narrows impregnable in late September after the captain of a Turkish gunboat had an "unfriendly conversation" with the commander of a Royal Navy destroyer, sowing a series of minefields.

The gateway to the Narrows – Cape Helles and Kum Kale – were guarded by historic forts with a handful of modern guns and numerous obsolescent ones. There were more forts on both sides of the water leading up to the Hellespont, where the narrowest point was protected by nearly a dozen fortifications. As at the gateway, most of their guns were outdated – and, when war came, stockpiles of ammunition were low.

In the wake of the November 3 bombardment, and with German steel added to Ottoman determination to defend the homeland, the Turks were permitted to improve their defences, unmolested. Searchlights. Heavy howitzers. Mobile batteries. Land-based torpedo launchers.

Twelve days before Christmas 1914, the Royal Navy decided to test these defences once more – but below the waves, not above them. not with the guns of the Fleet.

A TITAN IS TAMED

BATTLESHIP TORPEDOED

FIRST SUBMARINE VC

The small island of Tenedos – six miles long, three wide – a little more than a dozen miles from Cape Helles had become the hub of Allied naval operations. Hitherto, the British and French boats had done little more than patrol the waters off Kum Kale, occasionally pushing a little further.

For now no thought was given to sending a submarine into the inland sea of Marmara to wreak havoc – the boats simply weren't available, or capable.

The best the Allies could hope for was wreaking havoc among shipping off Çanakkale, and of the handful of Allied submarines in the eastern Mediterranean in late 1914, only HMS B11 was capable of the mission.

The Bs were only the third generation of British submarines – and given the technological advances in just 13 years of underwater warfare already obsolete.

Fifteen men – two officers, 13 ratings – squeezed inside a 140ft metal tube driven through the sea at 12kts on the surface when the petrol engines were running, whilst the electric motors would push a B-boat along at about 4½kts for up to ten hours when submerged.

■ Continued on page ii



● A commemorative postcard celebrates the deeds of HMS B11 and (inset) the mock Iron Cross presented to Lt Norman Holbrook for sinking the Turkish battleship Mesudiye

Continued from page i

Whatever the odds – and they were heavily stacked against him – Lt Norman Holbrook was “all for having a try.” Long before dawn on December 13 1914, his men cast off from the depot ship Blenheim off Tenedos. The crew had all written last letters to their families, to be sent should they not return.

And there was a good chance they would not. There were more than 370 mines laid in ten rows. Patrol boats ran up and down. There were the guns of the forts should a submarine dare to appear on the surface. And by night, the fiery beams of searchlights reached out across the silvery waters.

To the schemes and devices of man were added the challenges of Nature. Currents on the surface were strong. Those below were an unknown factor. And the waters were a mixture of fresh and salt water – which made keeping a submarine ‘in trim’ (level) was, at best, a challenge, at worst, impossible, resulting in ‘porpoising’, bucking up and down uncontrollably.

By 6am on Sunday, HMS B11 was at the entrance to the Narrows and dived – coming up to periscope depth for a few seconds every three quarters of an hour as Holbrook fixed his position. The water density caused the boat to rise and dive violently, the men fought at the hydroplanes – particularly when they had to maintain a level depth of 80ft to avoid the minefield on the surface.

By 9.40am – and with his batteries nearly half drained already – Holbrook found himself opposite Çanakkale and, more importantly, a large, grey vessel flying the Turkish ensign. From about 800 yards he launched a single torpedo – but didn’t see it all the way to its target, for B11 bucked once again, diving to 40ft. From there, the crew heard – but did not see – the impact. When Norman Holbrook regained control of his boat, he brought her up to periscope depth. There he saw the warship – the 40-year-old Mesudiye, a long obsolete battleship acting as a floating fort to safeguard the Narrows – going down by the stern.

“We’ve done it,” B11’s commander told his men, who let out a cheer.

Though fatally wounded, the Mesudiye fought back. Shells from her 6in guns began falling around B11, which ran aground as she tried to escape, her lights dimming as the batteries struggled to maintain the electric motors at full speed. For a good ten minutes, the submarine bumped the sea bed, condensation clouded the compass such that B11’s commander had little idea which way she was pointing or

where he was.

It was probably as much by luck as skill that B11 emerged from the Narrows and reached open waters – carried more by the current than her engines. She had been submerged for nine hours when Holbrook blew his tanks a little after 2pm.

The boat returned to the island of Tenedos to cheers from the rest of the Fleet, whose officers knocked up a cardboard Iron Cross for Holbrook to wear. George V went one better, agreeing to the award of the Victoria Cross – the first to be presented to a submariner. The rest of B11’s crew were honoured: Holbrook’s deputy received the DSO, every rating the DSM. And all shared a prize bounty – £3,500 (about £350,000 today), with Holbrook receiving £600 (£60,000 in 2015). Perhaps the greatest honour was bestowed by a few hundred Australians who decided the name of their small town, Germanton, was unpatriotic. For the past 100 years, it has been known as Holbrook.

The unassuming Holbrook was rather surprised by the international attention. The Mesudiye, he conceded in private, “was a very old ship & not much of a loss to the Turks.”

DEADLOCK IN WEST

FORCE THE NARROWS

DAMN THE DARDANELLES

However brave and skilful, Norman Holbrook’s deeds were just a pin prick. They did nothing to rock the edifice of the Ottoman Empire.

Worse for the Allied cause, the front in France and Belgium had solidified over the winter. There was deadlock from the North Sea to the Swiss border – and little prospect of things changing. All through Wednesday January 13 1915, the War Council had been closeted in a stuffy room in Downing Street debating the conduct of the war. The irascible John French – commander of the British armies on the Western Front – was all for having another go at the Hun, and his argument seemed to be swaying most of the Cabinet. But now, the First Lord of the Admiralty took the floor. No longer were the politicians, generals and admirals staring at the “dreary vista” of the Western Front with its hundreds of miles of trenches. They were dazzled by distant dreams and the domes of Constantinople. And as Winston Churchill laid it out, it all seemed so simple: a week-long bombardment would neutralise the forts, minesweepers would then move in to clear the fields, and then the Fleet could simply sail all the way to the Ottoman capital, dispatch the Goeben.

“The idea,” noted the war council’s secretary Maurice Hankey, a former Royal Marine, “caught on at once.”

The only man seemingly not bewitched by Churchill’s presentation was his First Sea Lord. Jacky Fisher chose not to disagree with his political master publicly. Privately, however, he seethed. He regarded it as a sideshow, a distraction from the ‘main event’, the showdown with the German Fleet in the North Sea. Every ship, every man committed to operations in the Mediterranean was one denied him in the only struggle which mattered. Britain could fail in the Dardanelles and, beyond prestige and lives, would lose little. But if the Royal Navy lost control

● ‘All for having a try’... Norman Holbrook VC



● The guns of pre-dreadnought HMS Cornwallis pound Turkish positions

of the North Sea, the war would be lost. But Churchill’s gaze was fixed firmly on the eastern Mediterranean. “You are simply eaten up with the Dardanelles and cannot think of anything else,” Fisher scolded him. “Damn the Dardanelles! They will be our grave!”

For once, Jacky Fisher was more bluff than blood. For all he harangued the First Lord, in the end he carried out his master’s bidding. The Royal Navy had to be shown to be doing something to win the war. “The experiment,” the admiral later admitted, “had to be made.” However reluctantly, the Senior Service pressed ahead with the operation to force the Dardanelles.

BARRAGE BEGINS

HAMMER THE FORTS

It was nine minutes before ten on the morning of Friday February 19 and Lt Harry Minchin enjoyed a perfect view of the Dardanelles. Perched in HMS Cornwallis’ crow’s nest, 150ft above the waterline, he could see his target in Asia Minor, an old fort south of Kum Kale, some 12,000 yards away. There were more than half a dozen ships on the gunline – British and French, all pre-dreadnoughts and little use other than floating batteries. Cornwallis bristled with four 12in and a dozen 6in guns, the former had been at the leading edge of naval technology when introduced 15 years before. Now Minchin gave the order for the battleship’s main armament to fire. The ship shuddered as an 850lb high-explosive shell left the muzzle of one of the 12in barrels at more than twice the speed of sound. Black and grey smoke enveloped Cornwallis before gradually dispersing. It took around 15 seconds for the projectile to reach its objective. “I scored a jolly good hit first go,” Harry Minchin noted excitedly in his diary. His had been the opening salvo “of the whole proceedings.”

The battleship’s fire was methodical – just one round a minute, all through the morning – before she stepped up the tempo in the afternoon, closing the range with the even older HMS Vengeance. The latter came under heavy fire from the Turkish batteries, so Cornwallis let rip. Minchin was in his element. “We fairly blazed at the fort, every gun in the ship going off together & doing two rounds a minute at least from every gun. We blew No.1 Fort to a perfect inferno, rocks & smoke, flame, dust & splinters all in the air together. We then got under fire from another fort, so we switched onto her then & never in my life have I had such a ripping time. 3,000 lbs of shell a minute bursting all round one must be a bit disconcerting.”

Cornwallis wasn’t hit, but she did, Minchin conceded, have “a few

close shaves.”

After seven and a half hours, with the battleships now silhouetted against the setting sun and the forts at the gateway to the Dardanelles shrouded in dust, smoke and fire, the guns of the castles of steel fell silent. They would remain silent for nearly a week, time until the weather cleared.

When the bombardment resumed on February 25, the aged pre-dreadnoughts had been joined by a wonder weapon: the world’s most powerful warship. With her 15in guns, there was nothing on the seven seas more formidable than HMS Queen Elizabeth. A broadside from her main armament would bring nearly seven tonnes of high explosive and steel down on any foe – more than four times as much as old battleships like HMS Cornwallis. Her presence, senior officers adamantly believed, would “certainly shorten operations.”

Given there were at least 950 souls aboard her and she was the pride of the Royal Navy, there are surprisingly few accounts from her crew of her participation in the bombardment (the Germans, however, lamented that the “crash of the 15in shells is ear-splitting”). But from the pre-dreadnoughts, diaries, letters and memoirs of the barrage abound.

To Lt Cdr Godfrey Crookshank of the aged HMS Agamemnon it all seemed “like gun practice”. He continued in his diary:

I felt quite surprised how little I seemed to worry during the battle – everyone else was the same. All the Turkish ‘projs’ burst on striking the water. They were evidently firing at extreme range as the angle of descent was so steep that none of the shots ‘rickered’.

Sailors watched the flashes of the Turkish guns, then waited 15 seemingly interminable seconds before the shells screamed overhead and landed harmlessly in the water. But eventually the guns got Agamemnon’s range – she anchored too close to Fort Orhanie near Kum Kale, and brought down 9.4in shells from the Turkish battery. She was struck seven times during a particularly grim ten-minute spell which left three sailors dead and eight wounded. “A little blood makes such an awful mess,” a midshipman who was pressed into action as a stretcher bearer wrote home to his family, “as a small fragment makes a ghastly wound.”

And while one side of the battleship was pouring death and destruction down on the enemy, on the other Agamemnon’s commander was pacing the deck encouraging the crew to paint the ship’s side. The men did so – but very half-heartedly.

TURKS HOLD FIRM

BATTERIES UNBOWED

KIPPER SMOKES THEM OUT

Having been told by their German adviser that the Dardanelles were secure, the sustained bombardment severely shook the Ottoman leadership. It began to contemplate evacuating Sultan Mehmed V, his court, the treasury and other arms of government across the Bosphorus into Asiatic Turkey.

But to the men of the gunline, it was becoming increasingly clear that the barrage was having little, if any effect. The sand and earthen fortifications seemed almost invulnerable – as one German gunnery officer spotting for the Turks discovered. A 12in British shell struck the earth surrounding his battery. The guns remained intact. The only damage caused was to the German’s pride. The blast stripped him of his clothing.

“It is almost impossible to knock out a fort from a ship, much less hit or put it out of action without a large expenditure of ammunition and the assistance of an aeroplane to locate the batteries or guns,” an officer on the Swiftsure observed.

With the guns of the Anglo-French fleet proving ineffective, raiding parties were sent ashore to knock out Turkish emplacements.

On the afternoon of February 26, HMS Vengeance put a party of 100 Royal Marines and sailors ashore near Kum Kale on the Asiatic shore.

The Royals would deal with the guns around Kum Kale; the matelots, led by torpedo officer Lt Cdr Eric Gascoigne Robinson would head to Orhanie and eliminate coastal and anti-aircraft batteries.

As was the custom of the day, Robinson – known by shipmates as Kipper – went into battle brandishing his sword. He and his men were dressed in tropical whites, not khaki – presenting a perfect target to the Turks.

Almost immediately the sailors became pinned down by enemy fire.

Robinson told his men to take cover while he went on, alone, evading the fire of snipers, and found the guns unoccupied.

Gun cotton charges destroyed two of the weapons, but Robinson scurried back down the hill for a second charge to finish off the task while the guns of the battleships brought down an iron rain upon the Turkish positions.

From the bridge of Vengeance, it seemed to Capt Bertram Smith that Eric Robinson was in his element “strolling around by himself under heavy fire – like a sparrow enjoying a bath from a garden hose.”

Having dispatched the guns on the wonderfully-named Achilles Mound, Robinson led his party to Orhanie, blew up a 9.4in gun, then began to return to the picket

Picture: National Museum of the Royal Navy



● ‘An exceedingly brave man’... Eric ‘Kipper’ Robinson VC

boats moored at Kum Kale pier. They got as far as the village cemetery – where the Turks offered fierce opposition, using a large domed mausoleum as their nest of resistance. Somehow Robinson got a message back to his ship, whose gunnery officer could just make out the target from his lofty position. Bertram Smith ordered one of his 6in guns to open fire. “The first round sent the tomb and fragments of its inmates – both ancient and modern – flying heavenwards,” he noted with satisfaction.

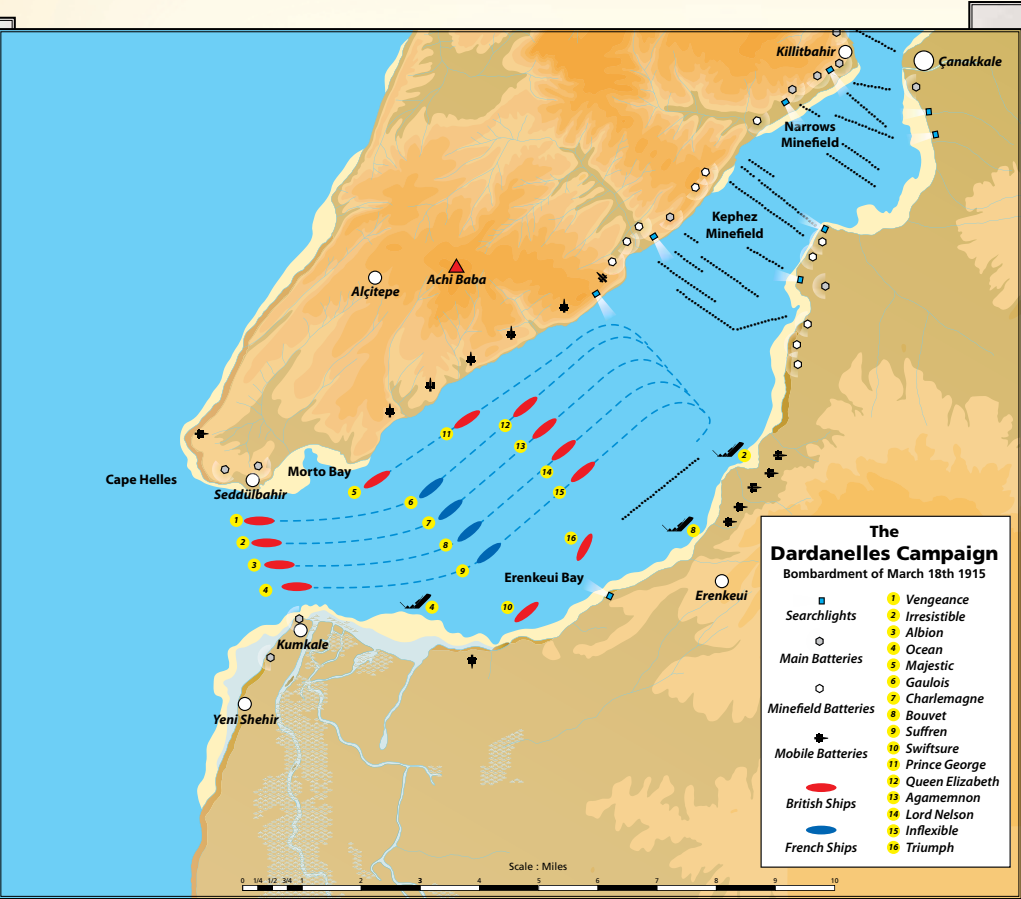
Eric Robinson brought his men back to Vengeance and was promptly put forward for Britain’s highest award – much to the surprise of Sackville Carden’s chief-of-staff, the thrusting Cdre Roger Keyes.

“I am honestly lost in admiration for Robinson, he has done splendidly and I honestly am surprised,” he wrote. “I did not think much of him as a First Lieutenant. But that evidently does not prevent him being an exceedingly brave man.”

Having dealt with the forts in Asia Minor, the raiding parties set about reducing the defences on the ‘toe’ of the Gallipoli peninsula. On the morning of March 4, Royal Marines of the Plymouth Battalion were put ashore at Seddulbahir under the umbrella of gunfire from the battleships.

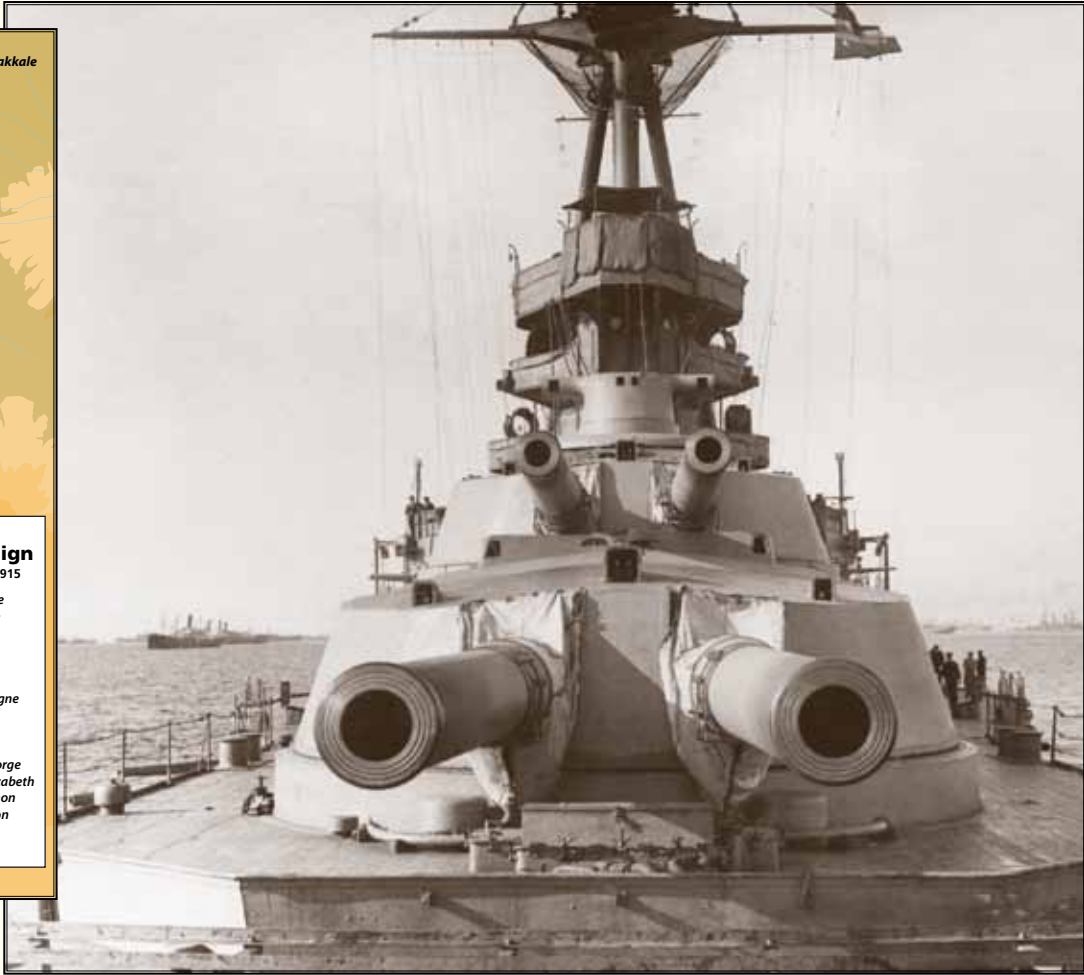
The landings went well. It was only when the marines had scaled the cliff and moved their way into the fort, which had seemed “quite dead” to L/Cpl Harold Benfell, that the defenders came alive. The ruins from the shelling made for perfect sniping positions for the Turks and for a good hour, Benfell and his comrades endured “a very warm time”, cut off from the rest of the party. Their commander, Lt Charles Lamplough succeeded in passing information to the ships about the strongpoints of the enemy’s resistance. “They let them have it,” Lamplough noted with satisfaction.





● The disaster of March 18 and (right) the imposing sight of HMS Queen Elizabeth and her 15in guns off the Dardanelles

Picture: Imperial War Museum/Q 13238



The bombardment seemed to silence the defenders – when the officer stormed the fort he found the Turks largely subdued. Two guns were spiked before the marines withdrew under heavy enemy fire. “We had quite a nice little scrap,” Lamplough wrote, “and then they sent a lot of shrapnel over – but they did not get us.”

A WEAK LEADER

HALF-HEARTED EFFORT

WRONG MAN FOR THE JOB

With the outer Dardanelles forts now seemingly neutralised, it appeared that the naval plan was running to schedule. “A feeling of optimism ran through the Fleet,” recalled 15-year-old Midshipman Eric Bush. When the French squadron emerged from the strait after supporting the demolition parties, its admiral stood on the bridge of his flagship saluting the Britons. The bands of the French ships played *Tipperary* and *God Save the King*. The Royal Navy responded with the strains of the *Marseillaise*.

The reality was rather different. Despite episodic bravery by men like Kipper Robinson, the Dardanelles operation was a rather half-hearted affair. Sackville Carden was a man without any panache, any drive, any initiative. Risk was a word not in his vocabulary. He had nearly 20 battleships at his disposal, but never committed more than a quarter of them at any one time. The 57-year-old vice admiral was chosen ahead of the right man for the post – Admiral Arthur Limpus, the RN’s liaison officer in Constantinople in the run-up to the war – for political, not military reasons. It might upset the Turks if someone who’d worked so closely with them were charged with sailing up the Dardanelles and into the heart of the Ottoman Empire.

Limpus knew Turkey, knew the Dardanelles, knew what the Ottoman Army was capable of (and, admittedly, believed the Turks would crumble after a stiff bombardment). Sackville Carden didn’t. But he didn’t merely not know Turkey, he didn’t know anything about overseeing a great endeavour, plucked from obscurity as Superintendent of Malta (where he’d been dumped out of the way of the Grand Fleet).

A sick man plagued by ulcers, Carden didn’t exude confidence. But his staff and senior Naval officers apparently did. And yet the only story the admiral told his masters in Whitehall was one of success. He would, he predicted, be off Constantinople by mid-March.

The next leg down the road to the Ottoman capital was to force the

Narrows – which meant obliterating the defences at Çanakkale. Battleships and assault parties could deal with the forts on both sides of the strait, but the succession of minefields proved rather more problematic – and the means for rendering them harmless were pitiful. The Navy couldn’t spare any sweepers from home waters, so pressed North Sea trawlers into service instead – still manned by their original crews. Having made the 4,000-mile journey from the north-east coast of England, and with naval officers who had no experience of mine warfare drafted to each vessel, the fishermen found their vessels utterly unsuited to the task now assigned them. Their deep draughts meant they were more likely to hit the mines lurking beneath the waters of the Narrows than ride over them. To sweep, a steel cable a couple of inches thick was strung between two trawlers, dragged below the surface, where it would scythe through the mines’ mooring lines, bringing the devices to the surface where they could be destroyed.

So much for the theory. In practice, the strong Dardanelles current and the weak engines on the trawlers invariably blunted the ‘scythe’. Rather than cut the mooring lines, the cable merely caught them and carried them along; the fishing boats ended up simply towing the mines.

This would have been hazardous enough in itself, but for the fact that the guns on both sides of the Dardanelles were far from silent.

As March 1915 opened, it took seven attempts to reach the minefields south of Çanakkale. Each night the wretched force slowly chugged through the gates of Hell. Each night they were lit up by the beams of searchlights. Each night the barrels of 74 guns bellowed. And each night, the makeshift minehunters turned for home.

Finally, Carden’s Chief-of-Staff imposed his will on the operation. Roger Keyes was a man of action, more brawn than brain, ever determined to take the fight to the enemy. He offered the trawlermen substantial financial bonuses, assigned the cruiser Amethyst and ordered more Royal Navy sailors to crew the fishing boats. On the night of March 12-13, the trawlers made a renewed effort to clear the mines at Kephez. As they approached the barrier, the boats were lit up by beams from the north shore, then the south. The Narrows were not three miles wide at this point, but the Turkish guns had yet to find the range. Aboard Trawler 48, Lt Cdr John Waterlow ducked as each shell whistled over his small boat. “I asked the skipper how he liked it, and he said he’d rather be fishing!” By the time the flotilla laboured

into Kephez Bay, where a good 180 mines had been laid in five rows, the trawlers were in the middle of an inferno. “Both banks blazed incessantly, and with the glare of the searchlights, which never left us for an instant, it was bright as day,” Waterlow wrote. “A veritable hail of shell fell all around us.” The two fishermen on the boat’s bridge began to waver, but not an old and bold petty officer who took charge of the wheel and continued to steer. One 6in Turkish shell smashed the funnel, covering Waterlow with flakes of paint and soot, a second passed through a cabin occupied by a handful of men, without harming anyone. The Amethyst was not so fortunate, hit repeatedly for a good 20 minutes as she floundered, her steering damaged. One enemy shell exploded in the stokers’ heads, just after a change of watch. The bulkheads and ceiling were covered with flesh and blood. The remains of the men – for that is all that was left of them – was collected and put into sacks. Their shipmates counted the parts of 19 dead. And the minefield was still as formidable as ever.

Roger Keyes would have been quite happy had every trawler been lost – he could call on 35 – if it meant the Narrows were cleared of mines. Churchill, exasperated by the course of an operation he could only follow from signals and telegrams, was equally indifferent to the fate of the trawler crews. “Two or three hundred casualties would be moderate price to pay for sweeping as far as Narrows,” he told Carden. “This work has to be done whatever the loss of life and small craft and the sooner it is done the better.”

The admiral had no intention of risking his trawlers again, but the pressure from Whitehall was telling, as Cdr Isham Worsley Gibson observed at a council of war following the failed sweeping attempts. “Vice Admiral looked very worried,” he recorded in his diary. “Somehow he doesn’t seem a strong enough man for the job.” He wasn’t. On March 16, Sackville Carden was ordered to relinquish command on medical grounds – but not before he had issued orders for an all-out effort to silence the guns of the Dardanelles. Some say he signed those orders whilst locked in his heads, the fateful pieces of paper passed to him under the toilet door.

Responsibility for the impending operation fell upon Sir John de Robeck – popular, a born leader, a good seafarer. Outwardly, he tried to exude confidence, promising to make a “real good try” to crack the Dardanelles once and for all. But men like Isham Worsley Gibson, HMS Albion’s gunnery officer, present at many of the conferences discussing the impending all-out effort, knew that the admiral shared their misgivings.

“Everyone, or nearly so I believe, knew really that it would be madness to try & rush them,” he noted in his diary. “A large army [of] 60 or 70 thousand is collecting for [the] purpose of co-operation – the only way to tackle this job – & why not wait for them?”

TURKS UNFAZED

THE NEW NAPOLEON

While Sackville Carden was curled up in pain on his toilet and his staff were agonising about the looming battle, Turkey’s Minister of War – and *de facto* leader of the country, for the sultan was little more than a figurehead – Enver Pasha was bravely predicting the failure of the Anglo-French joint enterprise.

The 53-year-old general had invited the American ambassador, to join him on an inspection of the defences of the Dardanelles. Henry Morgenthau thought Enver – head of the Young Turks who had striven to put an end to the sultan’s absolute rule – possessed by megalomaniacal delusions, imagining himself as a Turkish Napoleon.

“I shall go down in history as the man who demonstrated the vulnerability of England and her Fleet,” he told his American guest. “I shall show her that her Navy is not invincible.” And even if the enemy did force the Narrows, Enver claimed he was not worried. “Unless they bring a large army, they will really be caught in a trap. It seems to me to be a very foolish enterprise.”

To reinforce the point, Morgenthau was treated to a comprehensive tour of the defences on both sides of the Dardanelles. Just south of Çanakkale, he was introduced to the men manning the 240mm and 355mm German-built Krupp guns at Anadolu Hamidié – less a fort, more a series of ramparts by the water’s edge.

“My first impression was that I was in Germany,” Morgenthau wrote. “The officers were practically all Germans and everywhere Germans were building buttresses with sacks of sand and in other ways strengthening the emplacements.”

The artillerymen’s commander, Lt Col Wehrle, was in his element. Almost 50, he feared his life in the German Army had been for nought – war games, exercises, staff rides. But here he had the chance to prove himself “fighting a real English enemy, firing real guns and shells!” It wasn’t the Prussian martial spirit which imbued him, Morgenthau observed, “His attitude was simply that of a man who had spent his lifetime learning a trade and who now rejoiced at the chance of exercising it.” Wehrle was not to be denied all the war he wanted.

A NAVAL DISASTER

FORCE THE NARROWS

MINES SINK BATTLESHIPS

With the first rays of light falling on the Dardanelles on Thursday March 18, German staff officer Karl Schneider clambered into a reconnaissance plane, eager to see what the enemy was up to. From a height of 5,000 feet – with two souls aboard, the aircraft could climb no higher – Schneider was treated to a bird’s eye view of the ruins of Troy, before flying over Tenedos where he found at least 40 ships at anchor, some getting under way. Six battleships were on the move – HMS Inflexible had raised the flag of an admiral – bound for the mouth of the Dardanelles.

In fact, a dozen battleships – all but four of them British – formed in three divisions, with four more ships of the line held back in reserve. Queen Elizabeth led the battle line with the cries of *Heart of Oak* and *Rule Britannia* ringing from the upper decks of the ships held in reserve initially.

Every man in the armada convinced himself that come Sunday morning – just three days hence – the Fleet would be riding off Constantinople.

It was late morning before the weather and light around the Narrows cleared sufficiently for the fire and fury to begin.

HMS Irresistible’s chaplain Horace Wilkinson marvelled at the sight of the world’s most powerful warship hurling projectiles weighing nearly a tonne at targets up to a dozen miles away. To Army staff officer Maj Guy Dawnay March 18 seemed to be a day of contrasts – man’s fury, Nature’s beauty: a blue sky pockmarked by white clouds, a bright sun, akin to a summer’s day, snow-capped peaks of mountains merging with the heavens far away in Asia Minor, the ridges of the Gallipoli peninsula, and over the Narrows “a great brown-black column of smoke where the conflagration from the ships’ guns was still blazing.”

Overhead, a Sopwith seaplane tried to spot the fall of shot. Lt L H Straw was mesmerised by the sight of the fleet “hammering away at close quarters” and the Turks responding with equal vigour, churning up the waters of the Dardanelles. “Not a single soul to be seen on the decks,” the flier noted, “just the flash of guns to show that they were alive.” From above, the enemy shells crashing into the water about the battleships looked “like concentric circles of white.”

● Weak, sick, indecisive... Sackville Carden

Picture: Imperial War Museum/Q 112875

“Here at last was action,” wrote an American journalist, observing the battle from the 15th-Century Fort Çimenlik in Çanakkale. He watched as the battleships – “small specks playing follow-your-leader” – manoeuvred in the strait, puffs of smoke enveloping them as they fired, followed a few seconds later by the boom of the sound wave. It took them several salvoes to get the range of the mediaeval fort, but soon the correspondent was being showered by fountains of earth. “The din became terrific,” he wrote as the shells not only crashed around the old fortress, but the neighbouring village. “Houses spouted up, filling the air with timbers, tiles and stones.” He could clearly distinguish the 15in shells of HMS Queen Elizabeth from the 12in rounds hurled by the older pre-dreadnoughts. Each one was “like a thunderclap that strikes the house.”

Associated Press correspondent George Schreiner concurred with his compatriot’s assessment of the British flagship’s 15in shells of Queen Elizabeth. They came crashing in at a “truly terrifying rate”, smashing into Fort Hamidieh. But while the super-dreadnought’s gunnery seemed to be particularly accurate, the shells of the rest of the fleet seemed to fall more on Çanakkale itself than its many forts. To Schreiner, it was as if he had been given a front-row seat to the last days of Pompeii. “It began to literally rain roof tiles, bricks, rocks and timbers,” he wrote. “Shells exploding in front of the old breakwater remains sent a vicious hail of steel fragments and the fumes of the explosions began to make breathing a difficult task.”

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Aboard HMS Ocean, PO George Morgan from Gloucester was also struck by the spectacle of war. Morgan was in his early 40s, but the entries in his diary that Thursday betray an almost boyish enthusiasm – and naivety. “Salvo after salvo from the fleet made us dance with delight.” To Morgan and shipmates it was like watching a firework display. Sailors cried out “Oh! Look at that beauty!” and “Lovely!” – and laughed at the seemingly desultory response from the Turkish forts. “My sister could shoot better than that!”

It was mid-afternoon before HMS Ocean entered the fray. In the bowels of a magazine supplying one of the battleship’s turrets with 12in shells, Morgan had little concept of what was happening above him. “Working in the magazine was like being in a tank with a party outside with different size hammers belting away,” he recorded. “Now and then the ship would heel over, trembling, the thump of the propellers going now hard, now soft. The news came down that we were doing good work.”

Neither magazine nor gun turret was a pleasant place to be in the tumult of the barrage. In the heat, most men were down to their underwear, or perhaps a bathing costume, but still wore heavy boots – in case they dropped a shell (a 6in projectile weighed about 112lbs). The men were closed up for hour on end. The air was foul, the mood oppressive, refreshments minimal – cold cocoa, biscuits, perhaps some bully beef. And yet, there was something mesmeric about it all, as Midshipman Leslie Berridge in HMS Albion’s 12in forward turret wrote:

A metallic ringing as the projectile goes home, after that more clanking & in go the charges, finally a rumbling & the cage goes down. Then a clank & more hissing as the breech of the gun is closed & it is brought up to the horizontal. The hissing continues & the gun goes up & down, keeping it on the target. Ting, Ting, Ting – three times the fire gong rings, & suddenly the whole ship seems to lift and wobble, the wires of the shelterdeck screens tauten out & then go slack again & a brown cloud obscures every thing. The tremendous roar dies away & a rumbling, more punctuated with hissings, as the shell wobbled a little in its flight. After a few seconds the brown smoke clears, & you see a huge fountain of earth & stones go up close to the fort.

The battle reached its climax a little after mid-day. “The thunder turned into a hurricane,” German staff officer Carl Mühlmann noted. “An overwhelming number of heavy and heaviest calibre guns on ten warships spewed an iron rain on to the batteries and fortifications and also subjected the shoreline, where our howitzers and mortars were assumed to be, to a hail of shells.”

All of this was visibly having an effect on the defenders of the Dardanelles. Fire from the Turkish forts slackened. Some guns had been knocked out, others buried by sand and earth. None of the forts could talk to each other – telephone communications had been among the first victims of the Allied barrage.

To Mühlmann, surviving this hell seemed beyond the powers of men. And yet the Turks and Germans stuck to their guns, responding to each impact of a shell, which threw up columns of earth and dark columns of smoke, with a ‘counter-greeting’.

The French flagship Suffren was on the receiving end of these ‘counter greetings’ – repeatedly. A casemate and turret were knocked out as fires raged. They reached her port magazine and would have caused the ship to blow up, but for the independent actions of a junior officer who ordered the compartment flooded. As Suffren pulled out of the line of battle – and away from immediate danger – Rear Admiral Émile Guépratte went below decks to thank his men for their steadfastness. He



● **Death of giants... Abandoned HMS Irresistible leans to starboard after striking a mine while (inset) FS Bouvet capsizes while moving at high speed, taking most of her crew with her**

entered the world of the charnel house. “The scene was tragically macabre,” he recalled. “The flames spared nothing. Our young men, a few minutes ago so alert, so self-confident, all now lying dead on the bare deck, blackened, burnt skeletons, twisted in all directions, no trace of any clothing, the fire having devoured all.”

The wounded Suffren survived. Not so the Bouvet. As she started to pull away from the battle line so British vessels could move into position to take up the fight, a sheet of flame followed by a column of black smoke was thrown up around her. The Turks thought one of their shells had penetrated the Bouvet’s magazines. More likely, she ran over a recently-laid mine. Either way, her end was rapid and terrifying.

Aboard HMS Albion, Cdr Worsley Gibson watched as the French warship, moving at speed, increasingly heeled over to starboard. To the gunnery officer’s horror, she did not stop heeling. “She went over & over until she was on her beam ends & her masts went into the water, a lot of smoke & steam rolled out but no explosions took place & she turned bottom up for a few seconds.” For a few seconds a handful of men scrambled over the Bouvet’s upturned hull before the waves closed over it. All that was left of the ship – and 674 souls – were three dozen men thrashing around in the water and an acrid black cloud of smoke hugging the surface of the water.

“The whole thing didn’t take two or three minutes at the most. I had no idea a ship could disappear so quick,” Gibson wrote. “This rather shook us all for a moment – I know I felt a bit staggered but tried to keep the fore top party from thinking about it.”

A handful of Frenchmen were plucked out of the water by British picket boats, which were allowed to carry out the rescue effort unmolested; the Turkish guns fell silent briefly.

And the guns of the Allies? They were still firing – but it was proving increasingly difficult to direct them accurately. The lofty perches of the gunnery officers counted for little. Cordite smoke which engulfed each battleship as they belched their shells hindered the view of observers and choked them, while the swirl of dust, earth, and smoke obscured the targets on land.

The only thing that was clear was that the Turkish forts had not been subdued – and there could be no concerted effort to sweep the Narrows of mines. And that was to have fatal consequences.

A little after 4pm, HMS Inflexible “shuddered and shook” as she struck a mine. Men poured up from the lower decks, where water was pouring in and the power had

failed, causing ventilators to fail and suffocating fumes to spill through the darkened passageways and compartments. Though she listed badly to starboard, her propellers still turned and the wounded beast awkwardly made her way for the safety of Tenedos.

Three minutes later, the life and death struggle aboard Inflexible was repeated by the crew of HMS Irresistible as she too ran over a mine. “The whole ship heaved up from below,” her chaplain wrote a fortnight later. The lights failed immediately. In the pitch darkness, chaplain Horace Wilkinson and his shipmates clambered up ladders to reach the upper decks. Despite the lack of light, despite Irresistible’s worsening list, the man of the cloth was struck by the men’s calmness. “There they were, quietly waiting while those in front got out, no-one shoving or hurrying.” Quite simply, Wilkinson told his family, “they were splendid.”

As many of 700 of them crammed the battleship’s quarterdeck, while their ship presented the perfect target to the Turkish batteries. “The sea boiled with columns of water,” the chaplain wrote, “and we knew that just one shell bursting in that crowd would have killed many scores.” Two shells did strike the stricken battleship – but mercifully not on her crowded quarterdeck. For perhaps 20 minutes, the sailors awaited rescue – which looked increasingly unlikely. They hurled anything which would float into the water, then jumped in and clung on them. The clutch of sailors bobbing around in the water now presented a problem – there were too many in the water for rescue ships to get close. Eventually, HMS Wear, ran the gauntlet of fire, and carefully negotiated the bodies in the sea, and came alongside Irresistible to take the remaining men off. She was mostly done when the shell Horace Wilkinson had feared struck the quarterdeck – by now, almost devoid of sailors. Ten men were killed or wounded, the mangled bodies of the latter indelicately swung across to the Wear by rope, before the last of Irresistible’s able-bodied crew crossed to the destroyer and she pulled away “followed by shells like flies round a horse’s head.” The Wear got more than 600 men off in little more than half an hour, leaving behind a skeleton crew to try to save the Irresistible. “Looking back, it is almost unbelievable that so few shells hit,” Wilkinson wrote. “They came with a scream – sometimes two, when two arrived together, a puff of wind if one passed very close to you, a column of water.”

HMS Ocean was now ordered in to tow the stricken battleship but it quickly became apparent Irresistible was beyond saving – she was too close to shore and too exposed to

Turkish guns to be hauled away. Shortly before 6pm, the decision was taken to abandon her – at least till darkness fell and destroyers could be sent in under the cover of night.

For John de Robeck, the loss of Irresistible was the signal to abandon the operation. He raised the flag: *General recall*.

General Cevat Çobanlı, commanding Turkish forces at Çannakkale, watched the Allied ships turn around and disappear into the growing gloom of dusk. “They are gone,” he reported to his masters. “They could not break through. They *will* not break through.”

Except they weren’t quite gone just yet. As the Allied vessels withdrew from the Narrows, they were still engaging – and engaged by – the Ottoman batteries. Deep in HMS Ocean, George Morgan was carrying a charge when the force of a blast knocked him off his feet. “We didn’t need to ask what it was.” While his men scrambled to safety, it was the senior rating’s job to ensure the magazine was secure before he could leave.

With her rudder jammed and listing to port, Ocean came under merciless fire from Turkish guns which merely added to her injuries – although, thankfully, causing little loss of life.

“I have a vivid picture of the setting sun with the Ocean listing heavily to starboard and two destroyers alongside rescuing her crew with shells falling all around,” Cdr Harry Kitson of HMS Swiftsure remembered. “If any officers can be said to have acted up to the best traditions of the British Navy on that day, those officers in charge of small craft did.”

They saved the bulk of Ocean’s sailors. But they could not save the ship. After 90 minutes, with coal bunkers and engine rooms flooding or flooded, the decision was taken to abandon her too.

About the same time the last sailor left Ocean, Irresistible was devoured by the Dardanelles. For an hour after sunset her dead hull was lit by the reddish glow of flame as she suffered hit after hit from the Turkish guns before she finally succumbed to the successive blows.

Ocean too followed her into the depths sometime that night. When destroyers edged in to try to find both battleships sometime before midnight, they could see neither.



As the battleships pulled out of the line and relaxed from action stations, men scrambled to the upper deck for fresh air. “By looking at a man’s face you could tell if he had been stationed below as ammunition supply, or engine room, or those who had been at the guns,” wrote Royal Marine Cpl Fred Brookes

aboard HMS Triumph. The gunners were still full of fight. Those who had been locked in the battleship’s bowels were ashen faced. “From 9am to 5pm they had heard nothing but the crash of shells striking our ship and the sound of our own guns firing.”

And what has their day’s labours achieved? “The question is: have we done three ships’ worth of damage to the forts?” an officer aboard HMS Ark Royal wondered. Almost certainly not. When they took stock at the day’s end, the Turks found they had lost no more than 200 men. Of the 176 guns guarding the Narrows, only eight had actually been hit – and only half of those fully knocked out. What they lacked, however, was ammunition. Having fired nearly 2,000 shells, stocks were running perilously low – some batteries had as few as ten rounds left.

The German commander in Turkey, Liman von Sanders, was non-plussed by the day’s barrage.

“In spite of the expenditure of enormous amounts of ammunition, the hostile fleet accomplished no great result,” he wrote. “March 18th is – and remains – a day of honour for Fortress Dardanelles.”

German admiral Wilhelm Souchon, the man who had skilfully guided the Goeben and Breslau through the Mediterranean to the Bosphorus and was now *de facto* commander of the Ottoman Navy, concurred. March 18 filled him with the “great joy of victory. Hopefully the English will come again today,” he wrote the next morning, “and again suffer such losses. If they really want to succeed, they need to do it before any damage to the earthworks, telephone lines and so on is made good.”

The irrepresible Roger Keyes was certainly determined to make another assault. Late on Thursday evening, he had accompanied the destroyers searching in vain for Ocean and Irresistible.

Except for the searchlights there seemed to be no sign of life and I had a most indelible impression that we were in the presence of a beaten foe. I thought he was beaten at 2pm. I knew he was beaten at 4pm – and at midnight I knew with still greater certainty that he was absolutely beaten; and it only remained for us to organise a proper sweeping force and devise some means of dealing with drifting mines to reap the fruits of our efforts. I felt that the guns of the forts and batteries and the concealed howitzers and mobile field guns were no longer a menace.

Keyes’ views were the exception, not the rule. Harry Kitson was sure “the day had gone against us.” Worse, he conceded, “it seemed we had sustained a disaster.” As for John de Robeck, he was visibly depressed by the outcome of the day’s battle, also branding it “a disaster” – a term other senior officers urged him not to use. By the next morning, he had recovered his composure somewhat.

“We are all getting ready for another ‘go’,” he wrote. The Royal Navy, he proclaimed, was “not in the least beaten or downhearted.”

To Liman von Sanders two things were clear at the end of March 18: the Anglo-French Fleet would never reach Constantinople on its own. And, having gathered such forces and expended so many lives, the enemy would not abandon its dream of reaching the Bosphorus – “it would not have been in keeping with British tenacity or energy.”

“A large landing had to be counted upon,” he determined.



ENTER SIR IAN

‘KNOWLEDGE WAS NIL’

A MAN OF DREAMS & POEMS

It was a little after 10am on Friday March 12 1915 when Ian Hamilton hurried across Whitehall, into the War Office, across the tiled floor and up the white marble stairs to be shown into the office of the Minister for War, K of K – Lord Kitchener of Khartoum.

Few faces in the British Empire were better known – the stern, almost accusatory image of the 64-year-old Field Marshal appeared on recruiting posters up and down the land: Britons, Kitchener wants you.

And now Horatio Herbert Kitchener wanted Sir Ian Hamilton, two years his junior. The generals had known each other for a long time – Hamilton had been the field marshal’s chief-of-staff in South Africa. But they were not friends. Friends was a strong word. Kitchener was not a man of warmth. Nor was he a man of many words. Barely looking up from his writing desk, Kitchener said tersely: “We are sending a military force to support the Fleet now at the Dardanelles and you are to have command.”

The two men had conferred on a daily basis for months. Not once had Kitchener mentioned Gallipoli. And now this. Hamilton was taken aback. “My knowledge of the Dardanelles was nil. Of the Turk, nil. Of the strength of our own forces, next to nil.”

But that did not mean Sir Ian Hamilton would turn down the mission. “We have done this sort of thing before, Lord K,” he told the war minister. “You know without saying I will do my best.”

Ian Hamilton is among the more baffling figures in British military history. A donkey he was not – he possessed too much charm and personality, cared too much for the fate of the men under his charge. He was a good soldier – he was twice put forward for the VC (and twice turned down, narrowly) – serving in the four corners of the Empire. And yet, he seemingly lacked the killer instinct. Too often he was distracted by dreams – after the war he would publish his diaries of the Gallipoli campaign which are as frustrating as they are insightful. In the midst of the greatest amphibious undertaking of the age, the entries fly off at tangents. There are song lyrics (a generation before he’d published a book of poetry and songs), lapses into Latin. The diaries and memoirs are a let down because they are

too dry. With the words of Sir Ian Hamilton you wish to shake him and urge him to get to the point. Too often he seems captivated by the spectacle and panoply of war, rather than actually waging it.

Such was the man given command of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.



COOL PRUSSIAN

GERMAN EFFICIENCY

WOEFUL SECURITY LAPSES

There is none of the dreamer in the memoirs of Ian Hamilton’s adversary, Otto Liman von Sanders, who had arrived in Constantinople at the end of 1913 to take charge of the German Military Mission.

Just as Ian Hamilton was not the stereotypical World War I donkey general, so Liman does not fit the typical mould of a German general. Prussian, yes, but also Jewish. Moustachioed, naturally, but the neatly-trimmed hairs did not entirely hide the hint of a smile in his official portraits. Ian Hamilton had climbed through the ranks thanks in good part to his actions on the field of battle. Liman von Sanders was an organiser – and would prove himself to be very adept at it.

In the immediate aftermath of the bombardment, Liman was put in charge of the newly-created Fifth Army, formed specifically to defend the Dardanelles. Five divisions – soon to be six – which the German had to get into shape. Thankfully for Liman, his foe were obliging. “The British gave me four full weeks before their great landing,” he wrote. He set about his task with vigour. His means were limited, but not his ingenuity. By night – to avoid the British scout planes and the guns of the Allied fleet (which even shot at individual cavalrymen or pedestrians) – Turkish troops ripped up garden fences and stripped heads from torpedoes to create makeshift obstacles and land mines, even rolling out barbed wire beneath the waves to catch any invader unawares.

And if the bombardments through February and March hadn’t alerted Liman to his enemy’s intentions... slipshod security measures certainly did. He knew harbour facilities had been constructed in Mudros and military equipment was being unloaded daily, while British officers were buying up lighters and tugs – for cash – from shipping owners in Athens’ port of Piraeus. There was talk of 50,000 British troops, then 80,000, milling around on the islands of Imbros and Lemnos, not to mention 50,000 French *poilus*. Letters were posted to troops addressed ‘c/o The Constantinople Expeditionary Force’. Egyptian newspapers – beyond the realm of the British Empire’s official censors – reported the comings and goings of Commonwealth troops arriving at Alexandria and Port Said. And just to reinforce the point, the French commander gave an interview to an Egyptian journalist explaining how one might seize the Gallipoli peninsula.

How one might seize the Gallipoli peninsula... It was the single thought possessing the mind of Sir Ian Hamilton as he hurried east. He’d been given a small staff to help him plan his undertaking. Not the best, naturally, they were all in France. He knew hardly any of them, and a good few had never donned uniform before.

Herbert Kitchener did, at least, grant Ian Hamilton a final audience.



● *Troops gather on the hillside above the harbour at Mudros, the main staging area for the invasion*

Picture: National Museum of the Royal Navy

He had little to offer the commander of the grandly-titled MEF – Mediterranean Expeditionary Force (Hamilton had successfully lobbied for a change from the original Constantinople) – certainly little in the way of hard facts. Enemy forces? Perhaps 40,000. Guns? “No-one knows.” The Turkish commander? Possibly Jevad Bey. It was unlikely there would be many enemy soldiers on the toe of the peninsula; a landing could take place “on very easy terms.” Hamilton left the war minister’s office no wiser than when he walked in. “None of the drafts help us with facts about the enemy, the politics, the country and our allies.”

The only certainty, the forces at his disposal: upwards of 80,000 men – Australians and New Zealanders (“no finer material exists”), the newly-formed British 29th Division under General Aylmer Hunter-Weston (“a slashing man of action”), the Royal Naval Division (“an excellent type of officer and man”) and a French contingent.

After a train to Toulon and a dash across the Mediterranean in the new cruiser HMS Phaeton, Ian Hamilton arrived at Tenedos on the afternoon of March 17. The general was quickly ferried across to “that lovely sea monster” HMS Queen Elizabeth for a council of war; it was the eve of the attempt to force the Narrows by warship alone. Yet he was sufficiently perturbed by his first sight of the Dardanelles.

“Here, the peninsula looks a tougher nut to crack than it did on Lord K.’s small and featureless map,” he confided in his diary.

“I do not speak for myself for I have so far only examined the terrain through a field glass. I refer to the tone of the sailors, which strikes me as being graver and less irresponsible than the tone of the War Office.”

The sailors’ tone was even graver the following evening after the débâche of March 18 – Hamilton watched from the relative safety of Phaeton and his blood ran cold at the sight of mighty leviathans sinking. The general immediately realised the Navy would never reach Constantinople on its own. And that meant “the soldiers will have to do the trick.”

KHAKI SAILORS

UP FOR THE ‘STUNT’

DESTINATION DARDANELLES

Ian Hamilton reached the Aegean in a mere four days. For troops being dispatched from Britain, the journey was a more leisurely ten.

On the last day of February, the Grantully Castle headed out into the Bristol Channel, the fanfare from the trumpets of the sailors occasionally drowned out by the blasts of the ship’s horn. After a long, unforgiving winter, the sunset this late winter’s day was magnificent, a herald of spring and better days.

A relatively new steamer, the ship had served on runs to Europe

and Africa before being pressed into service as a troopship. It was one of 13 assigned to transport the Royal Naval Division – 12 battalions of sailor/soldiers and Royal Marines.

Hurriedly formed from surplus sailors at the war’s outbreak, the division had been mauled in its only action to date: a brief, but brutal, encounter with the German Army outside Antwerp. It lost over 2,000 in just a few days of battle – all but five of them prisoners – and returned to England to regroup.

The remnants – plus new recruits – were dispatched to a hastily-erected (and not especially well-equipped) camp outside Blandford in Dorset. And there these sailors spent the winter learning how to be soldiers.

And by the turn of 1915, the men of the nine Naval battalions – each named for a Naval hero: Hood, Nelson, Anson, Collingwood etc – were looking more like soldiers. Gone was their Senior Service blue, replaced by khaki. The only sop to their Service, a Naval cap – also khaki, but retaining its RN form.

Each man kept his Naval rank, however. There were ABs, not privates, petty officers, not sergeants. They retained Naval slang too. The field kitchen became the galley; officers relaxed not in the mess but the wardroom; a night out remained a run ashore.

“Many of the men – and some of the officers – requested ‘leave to grow’,” Winston Churchill later wrote, “and paraded creditable beards in the faces of a clean-chinned Army.”

By mid-February, the men of the Nelson Battalion received a “notice to sail” by the end of the week – not before the now-trained ranks had been inspected by Churchill. The First Lord was treated to various demonstrations, not least sailors crawling through the mud in pitiless rain and hail, and was delighted by what he saw, jumping up, clapping and pointing with delight almost like a small child.

A few days later, the Royal Naval Division moved first by foot, then by train, to Avonmouth to embark. “Destination is ‘somewhere East’ – Palestine or East Africa I suppose,” Lt Warren Barclay – one of three brothers to answer his country’s call (and the only one to survive the war) – wrote to his family. “The colonel says we may be back in two months which suggests a raid – a bombardment by the fleet and then a landing party. I believe six battalions will go. Pith helmets may be served out – two battalions of marines went off recently with them. At any rate it is a warm climate. We are all awfully bucked at having a stunt like this all to ourselves.”

The only bucking, initially, was of the Grantully Castle, which shuddered and corkscrewed in the Atlantic swell. The Hoods hung over the sides. Sailors they were, but it did not make them immune to seasickness. Only as the flotilla approached the more sheltered waters of the Mediterranean did the weather quieten and the waves abate, permitting the daily routine of drill and instruction. Officers urged their men to receive various jabs

and inoculations – most, though not all, complied.

Food on board was neither plentiful nor particularly good. Woe betide any man who drank an extra cup of cocoa – punishment in the form of more exercise was the order of the day.

Free time was spent playing cards or bingo. The lower decks of the Grantully Castle echoed to the sound of an accordion, the wardroom to a piano.

After a brief call into Malta, the division continued east, arriving in Mudros Harbour on Lemnos where Anglo-French warships were clustered in abundance. For a few days the division practised storming the beaches, clambering down the sides of the ships, rowing ashore, then charging up the sand, after which islanders offered them figs, oranges and chocolate – for a price. After a fortnight of hanging around Lemnos, which was really far too small an island to use as the staging post for such an invasion, the division was ordered to sail south for Egypt, where the bulk of the ground forces assigned to the Dardanelles expedition were both acclimatising and training.

In fact, the climate around the gateway to Suez was neither especially hot nor changeable – it hovered between 63°F and 72°F, certainly cooler than Lemnos. Nevertheless, the men suffered from sun and heatstroke, they were plagued by flies and mosquitoes.

To take account of the Middle East heat, the day’s work began early – and finished early. Although the Arab Quarter of Port Said was out of bounds – and policed by MPs – the ban was largely ignored. For almost all the men, this was their first contact with the Mohammedan world – Muslim and Islamic didn’t become words in the regular vocabulary of Westerners until the 1960s. They grew accustomed to the muezzin’s call to prayer, the excitable, garrulous nature of the native populace. “Compared with a mob of excited Arab,” AB Joe Murray noted in his diary, “Bedlam would be a Victorian vicarage tea party.”

On April 3, Murray and his shipmates paraded for Ian Hamilton as they had done for Winston Churchill six weeks earlier – this time in the rolling, heavy sands on the edge of Port Said.

Having caught the overnight train from Alexandria – and having breakfasted royally – Hamilton rode out on an Arab charger to the parade ground, close to the docks.

The winter’s training had done the RND good, the general noted – they marched much better than they had the previous autumn when he’d last watched the sailors “although the sand was against them, muffling the stamp of feet.” As Joe Murray conceded afterwards, marching in the sand was “like trying to walk on a spring mattress.”

Ian Hamilton was in his element watching a good parade like this. He was particularly impressed by a display of French cavalry. “No limit to what these soldiers may achieve,” he noted. “The thought passed through the massed spectators and

set enthusiasm coursing through their veins. Loudly they cheered; hats off; and hurrah for the Infantry! Hurrah, hurrah for the Cavalry!”

But away from the pomp and ceremony planning the Gallipoli adventure – the undertaking never received a grandiose covername such as Overlord 30 years later – was running far from smoothly.

Hamilton was confronted with a myriad problems – some of his own making, but many not. His staff had little appetite for the operation – “they would each apparently a thousand times sooner do anything else except what we are going to do.” Perhaps wisely, for there had never been anything like it. Sir Ian Hamilton certainly grasped that:

To throw so many men ashore in so short a time in the teeth of so rapid a current on to a few cramped beaches; to take the chances of finding drinking water and of a smooth sea; these elemental hazards alone would suffice to give a man grey hairs were we practising a manoeuvre exercise on the peaceful Essex coast.

The general harked back to his first impressions of the rugged shores of the peninsula. On maps and charts it all looked so “neat and simple.” The reality, however, meant “dove-tailing and welding together of naval and military methods, signals, technical words, etc, and the worst punishment should any link in the composite chain give way.”

And that, in April 1915, looked entirely possible. No matter what improvisations there were, Lemnos and Mudros could support, at best, 10,000 men, not ten times that number. There was little order to the way stores and supplies had been sent out from England; they arrived in the eastern Mediterranean in utter confusion. “We are struggling like drowning mariners in a sea of chaos; chaos in the offices; chaos on the ships; chaos in the camps; chaos along the wharves,” Hamilton fumed.

He could, but did not, have added chaos in the staffs. Logistics – key to success in the long run – played second fiddle to the business of fighting. Chief among the (many) failings, provision for the wounded. There were just two hospital ships assigned – they could deal with no more than 700 casualties. A couple of transporters served as makeshift floating ‘treatment centre’ for the lightly wounded. Serious cases would be sent to permanent hospitals in Cairo and Alexandria (two to three days’ sailing away) or Malta (four to five days).

Such facilities would be overloaded – and Hamilton’s staff knew it. They reckoned 3,000 men would be wounded in the initial landings alone. Senior medical officers upped the estimate to 10,000 – and ordered the dispatch of more hospital ships to Mudros forthwith. Medics would accompany the troops ashore on the first day – but whatever cutters



and boats survived the tumult of the initial landings would be used by the fighting men; ferrying the wounded off the beaches was of secondary importance.

Still, even if there were heavy casualties initially, the Turks would soon crumble. So the British staff reasoned at any rate. The Turks would offer “energetic resistance” to the landings, but once the Commonwealth and French troops had a firm foothold on Gallipoli “this opposition may crumble away – and they may turn on their German masters.” Indeed, there was even a suggestion the Turks might welcome the British as liberators.

As for the men storming the peninsula, they were told to single out Turkish officers and non-commissioned officers. They were the backbone of the Ottoman Army. Without them, the ordinary Turkish soldier was “of very little use and has very small power of initiative.” He was not particularly nimble, a pretty average shot and didn’t much care for the dark.

Such ‘helpful’ advice was typical of the British world view of the day – its empire was the largest in the world, everyone else was inferior in some way. The Turk, proclaimed one staff officer of the Australian and New Zealand Corps, was “an enemy who has never shown himself as good a fighter as the white man.”

And just as they misjudged their foe, so they misjudged the challenges of terrain and climate. In time, Sir Ian Hamilton would protest about the lack of intelligence and good quality maps to assist his staff planning the landings – “the Dardanelles and Bosphorus might be in the moon for all the military information I have to go upon,” he fumed.

In fact Hamilton had almost all the information any commander in 1915 might require to plan a large-scale operation: surveys, studies, staff reports. There were maps – and they were sufficient for the task of planning, whatever the general’s protestations. Bertram Smith, captain of HMS Vengeance, studied the charts of the peninsula and concluded the terrain was formidable. “Good map reading is not common,” he noted waspishly, “and many Army officers are bad at it.”

And each day, when weather permitted and when not spotting for the guns of the Fleet, No.3 Squadron Royal Naval Air Service put its handful of two-seat aircraft aloft to scout enemy positions. Their efforts were evidently unappreciated. When Lt Geoffrey Ryland of seaplane carrier HMS Ark Royal received a copy of the orders for the invasion that the Army had “decided to land at nearly all the places which we had reported as being either difficult or impossible. I was convinced that if the landing was successful it would only be at the expense of very heavy casualties.”

The Naval aviators had just over 20 aircraft at their disposal, almost all of them either obsolete or underpowered – or both. Shortages of *matériel* were compounded by

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shortages of manpower; there were just 11 qualified pilots and 120 engineers and maintainers.

None of this was sufficient for the “stunt”, Charles Samson told the expedition’s commander. He wanted 30 good two-seater aircraft, two dozen fighters to defend them, 40 trained pilots, 400 skilled men to maintain the machines. “So equipped he reckons he could take the peninsula by himself and save us all a vast lot of trouble,” Hamilton observed.

As it was, from the beginning of April, Samson’s squadron began dropping 100lb bombs sporadically, sometimes with success (the commander was delighted with a raid on the barracks at Kephez Point which killed 23 enemy soldiers), more often than not the projectiles failed to hit their intended targets – but missing was not entirely surprising, for the men devised their own sights.

The Turks responded with anti-aircraft fire (always ineffective) and rifles – whose bullets occasionally peppered the flimsy machines. The skies did not entirely belong to No.3 Squadron, however. The Germans bombed the airfield at Lemnos. The naval aviators gave chase – but couldn’t catch up with the Hun. They did give their enemy “some presents in return”: six 100lb bombs which ripped up the runway and almost damaged the sheds.

SUBMARINES AGAIN

SECOND HELPING OF KIPPER

Another new weapon of war about to be thrown into the Dardanelles campaign was the submarine. Since the daring deed of Norman Holbrook four months earlier, there had been little action beneath the waves. But towards the end of March, new submarines – the latest E-class – began to arrive in the Mediterranean.

Though barely half a dozen years separated the Es from Norman Holbrook’s B11, but these were machines designed for war. More than 30ft longer and nearly three times the weight, they were armed with ten torpedoes. Dived or on the surface they were faster and could patrol for more than three weeks.

Now, could they force the Dardanelles where the surface fleet had failed?

Like Holbrook before him, Lt Cdr Theodore Brodie avoided the various mine barriers and reached the Narrows at Kephez Point. And there, like B11, HMS E15 ran aground. But here the E-class’ weight worked against it. Where Holbrook had been able to shift his boat, E15 refused to move, her conning tower high above the water.

Not surprisingly, it drew the attention of the Turks who dispatched a torpedo boat and began plastering the exposed submarine with shells. Brodie was killed with almost the first round. Other rounds penetrated the hull and shattered the batteries, sending chlorine gas spilling through E15. Six of her crew died before they could escape. The remainder managed to scramble out – not before two officers had succeeded in destroying confidential material and charts – and were taken prisoner by the Turks.

There remained the thorny subject of £105,000 of state-of-the-art naval hardware – worth about £10m today – sitting in full view of the Ottoman and German Navy for them to salvage. The Admiralty could not allow this to happen – and threw everything at the mission to scuttle her. Bombs were dropped by No.3 Sqn. They missed – or were driven off by Turkish ack-ack. Three submarines tried to torpedo the wreck. They missed, failed to find E15, or were thwarted by fog. The 12in guns of battleships HMS Triumph and Majestic were turned against the boat – and proved no more effective than the rounds hurled at the Dardanelles forts four weeks earlier.

It was left to Eric Gascoigne Robinson to finish off HMS E15 by leading a raiding party in a couple of picket boats armed with torpedoes. This time Robinson missed. Not so his colleague Lt Godwin who managed to close to under 200 yards before unleashing a torpedo as Turkish shells crashed about his boat. The fish hit home, producing “a glorious volcano of noise and



Men of the Royal Naval Division practise landings from cutters on the island of Skyros, just five days before the invasion of Gallipoli

Picture: Imperial War Museum/Q 14893

demolition.” Godwin was awarded the DSO for his deeds, Robinson promoted commander; he wouldn’t be gazetted for his Victoria Cross until August 1915.

NATURE’S GLORY

– AND OBSTACLES

MAN’S INGENUITY

The powers of man are as nought compared with the power of Nature. And late April in the Aegean found Nature at her most bountiful. Temperatures by day were in the low 20s Celsius – 70°F – but dropped ten degrees by night. “The hills – scorched and left clay-coloured in the autumn by the rays of the sun – shimmered in the most wonderful green,” German officer Carl Mühlmann wrote almost lyrically. He continued:

Countless flowers pleased the eye. The deep-blue sea was calm apart from the occasional sail passing. This pleasant sight imprinted itself indelibly on the memory of the staff of the Commander-in-Chief in Gallipoli.

In front of the small mosques, under old plane trees and the most wonderfully-ornate fountains the delightful peaceful life of the Orient – so alien to the European eye – played out. Patriarchal figures sat at low tables in front of the humble coffee houses, politely getting up when strangers passed. There was hustle and bustle and comings and goings in the narrow bazaars of Chanak and Gallipoli. Heavily-laden caravans of camels moved slowly through the narrow streets. Black-haired water buffalo pulled heavy carts, as they have done for millennia in the Orient, or wallowed comfortably in pools of water. Flocks of fat-tailed sheep grazed under the extensive oak groves and meadows. The slopes of Erenköy were covered with delicious wine. A picture of peace. Only now and then did the occasional fading thunder of cannon and the masts of warships, visible far into the heart of the land, warn of the seriousness of the hour.

For all his faults – and they were many and grave – Sir Ian Hamilton was not fooled by this apparent picture of total serenity. “The peninsula itself is being fortified and many Turks work every night on trenches, redoubts and entanglements,” he noted in his diary. “Not one single living soul has been seen, since the engagement of our marines at the end of February, although each morning brings

forth fresh evidences of nocturnal activity, in patches of freshly turned up soil. All landing places are now commanded by lines of trenches and are ranged by field guns and howitzers.”

By now, Hamilton and his staff had selected six landing sites on the peninsula. They ruled out a landing at the neck of the peninsula – high above the Narrows and north of the town of Gallipoli – because it was too heavily fortified and defended. Kitchener had forbidden a large-scale enterprise on Turkey’s Asiatic shore. That left the toe of the promontory.

Five beaches were chosen on the tip, three at the gateway to the Narrows (S, V and W) two on the Aegean coast (X and Y). S was by far the most promising – and hence the smallest landing party was assigned to it. Just three companies were earmarked for the sweeping sands of Morto Bay to cover the right flank of the landings to the west.

Those main assaults would take place at V Beach at Seddülbağır (just ten yards wide, 300 long, and overlooked by two forts and ground rising to up to 150ft) and W at Tekke Burnu (400 yards long, perhaps 20 wide, again hemmed in by ridges and high ground, with a narrow ravine the only exit). The terrain between them was no more forgiving: rutted by seasonal watercourses and invariably covered by scrub and bushes, with the occasional stunted tree. There was little in the way of natural water resources – another reason why the toe of the Dardanelles was so sparsely populated.

A short distance along the coast in the Aegean, X and Y beaches were so narrow they were barely worthy of the title beach. They were also dominated by cliffs.

By far the largest landing on the Aegean shore was earmarked by 2,000 yards of sand curving gently around a bay just north of the headland of Gaba Tepe, a good dozen miles north of Cape Helles. Today Turks call it Anzak Koyu. The English-speaking world know it as Anzac Cove.

None of the landing sites was especially promising – all led to the hilly spine running down much of the middle of the peninsula, interspersed with the occasional plateau.

Getting off the beaches seemed less of an issue to Ian Hamilton than getting on to them, however. “The crux was to get the army ashore. Once ashore, I could hardly think Great Britain and France would not in the long run defeat Turkey.”

But how to get the soldiers ashore? There were no landing craft in April 1915, no landing craft tanks. There were no airborne troops or parachutists. There were only steamers, tugs, lighters, pinnaces and rowing boats. For the most part, the tugs and pinnaces would tow the boats close to shore, whereupon the troops would row the final few yards on to the beach. All of which would expose the invasion forces to enemy fire, whatever the bombardment

from the guns of the fleet. At V Beach, however, a torpedo boat commander hit upon an unusual idea. Cdr Edward Unwin suggested running the collier SS River Clyde ashore, where troops would pour on to Turkish soil through holes cut in her side.

To anyone who grew up in the 1980s, the makeshift conversion might seem like a montage from the *A-Team*. The bow was turned into a sand-bagged fortress with machine-guns removed from the armoured cars of the Royal Naval Air Station and placed on River Clyde’s forecastle to provide covering fire for the landing troops. ‘Sally ports’ were cut in the collier’s hull and gangways built for the soldiers to run down. At the end, they would jump on a steam hopper and series of lighters forming a makeshift pontoon bridge and step on to the narrow sands of Seddülbağır. With the ancient ruins of Troy just half a dozen miles from V Beach, it was small wonder people began to refer to the vessel as the wooden horse.

NATURE’S GLORY

– AND OBSTACLES

MAN’S INGENUITY

While River Clyde was converted, the invasion force began to gather in the Aegean islands. The Royal Naval Division left Egypt in mid-April “thirsting for adventure,” Joe Murray noted in his diary. But as he passed the imposing statue to Ferdinand de Lesseps, the man who carved the path between the Mediterranean and Red Sea four decades before, the able seaman became wistful. “His works were of construction, whereas ours would be of destruction, human and material,” he wrote. “His name would live forever. How soon would ours be forgotten?”

To alleviate the boredom on the crossing, the men of the Hood Battalion held a fancy dress ball – with ‘ladies’, Zulu warriors and one soldier with makeshift armour made of biscuit tins. In the middle of the frivolity, battalion commander Lt Col Arnold Quilter stepped forward and gave his men a rousing speech. “We will give the Turks hell,” he promised, then outlined the plan for the coming days: the Hoods would land on the Gallipoli peninsula, then march on Constantinople and take it from the Turks. “The eyes of the world will be upon us and the whole course of the war will depend on the success of our effort.” Now the men of the Royal Naval Division knew their destination. “We had known unofficially before we left England,” Joe Murray wrote in his diary. “The whole world must have known.”

Within a month, Quilter – and many of the men he led – would be dead. But he captured a mood of adventure and excitement which imbued almost every man in the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force. Despite the ever-lengthening casualty lists from the Western Front published daily in the newspapers,

there remained an almost innocent optimism pervading the invasion force. “I only hope I may be able to nip over and have a look at Troy,” wrote the Royal Naval Division’s Lt Patrick Shaw Stewart. A classicist and Oxford scholar, Shaw Stewart was part of a small, unique band of idealist/romantic officers, among them Shaw Stewart’s friend Rupert Brooke, who died two days before the landings. The 26-year-old Shaw Stewart saw nothing but ancient dreams coming to life, dreams he encapsulated in poetry: Achilles in the Trench:

**I saw a man this morning
Who did not wish to die;
I ask, and cannot answer,
if otherwise wish I.**

**Fair broke the day this morning
Upon the Dardanelles:
The breeze blew soft, the morn’s cheeks
Were cold as cold sea-shells.**

**But other shells are waiting
Across the Aegean Sea;
Shrapnel and high explosives,
Shells and hells for me.**

**Oh Hell of ships and cities,
Hell of men like me,
Fatal second Helen,
Why must I follow thee?**

**Achilles came to Troyland
And I to Chersonese;
He turned from wrath to battle,
And I from three days’ peace.**

**Was it so hard, Achilles,
So very hard to die?
Thou knowest, and I know not;
So much the happier am I.**

**I will go back this morning
From Imbros o’er the sea.
Stand in the trench, Achilles,
Flame-capped, and shout for me.**

To Shaw Stewart, storming the Dardanelles was “the real plum of this war – all the glory of a European campaign without the wet, mud, misery and certain death of Flanders.” The operation, he predicted, was not “going to be at all dangerous – we shall only have to sit in the Turkish forts after the Fleet has shelled the unfortunate occupants out of them.”

One British major envisaged “trekking up the Gallipoli peninsula with the Navy bombarding the way for us.” Soon the Empire’s soldiers would be entering the Ottoman capital in triumph and newspaper vendors on the streets of London would be calling out: *Fall of Constantinople! British link hands with Russians!*

The ordinary soldiers, marines and sailors were imbued with similar enthusiasm, if not quite the same dreams of romantic enthusiasm. They found the constant drilling and exercising enervating,



Royal Naval Air Service pioneer Cdr C his Nieuport Scout biplane at Tenedos

especially as they were confined to the ships for days on end – there simply weren’t the facilities for all to train. It was, one soldier fumed, “a tedious, anxious, gnawing time when nobody did any work.” Still, Sir Ian Hamilton was impressed with the progress his force was making, especially the Antipodeans. Having watched an impressive large-scale practice landing, he enthusiastically recorded in his diary: “These Australians are shaping into Marines in double quick time and Cairo high jinks are wild oats sown and buried.”

The exercises the general watched on April 18 were among the last staged. His force was now ready – only poor weather was halting the enterprise. On Friday April 23 – the date Hamilton had earmarked for the landings initially – the winds abated and the sea calmed. The expedition commander gave the go-ahead. D-Day would be Sunday, April 25.

THE SHIPS DEPART

MAGNIFICENT SIGHT

TO STIR THE HEARTS OF MEN

There were now some 200 vessels of all shapes and sizes, all colours, gathered in the waters off Mudros. “As a spectacle, it is superb,” official war correspondent Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett observed from the quarterdeck of the old battleship HMS London. “Whatever the eventual fate of the combined expedition against the Dardanelles, it appeals irresistibly to the imagination.”

From his viewing platform, the journalist was treated to a panorama of “an assembly of warships, transports and smaller craft such as have never been brought together before.” The bay was studded with every manner of ship, large and small, dominated by HMS Queen Elizabeth and her 15in guns.

Yet for all the military might mustered off Mudros, Ashmead-Bartlett was convinced that the operation “was almost certainly doomed to failure.” The Turks were not the pushovers many commanders judged them to be, they had plenty of time to prepare their defences and, as soon as the Allied troops hit the beaches, the landings would be beyond the realm of generals and admirals – they would be unable to control events, irrespective of what the enemy did. In his mind, the correspondent ran through the challenges:

We are about to attempt to land an army on an unknown shore, of which no accurate maps are available; no general staff has patiently worked out every detail of the expedition, or measured its demands on our resources in relation to our deep commitments in other theatres of the war. The Commander-in-Chief has exercised no previous command in the World War, his Staff are equally inexperienced. Yet this is no ordinary campaign. No more precarious operation



Charles Samson prepares for contact in
Picture: Imperial War Museum/Q 13537

can be undertaken than to land an army from boats in the face of an enemy entrenched up to his neck and armed with modern weapons of precision. All the lessons of the war have shown the advantage which a defending army enjoys unless the assault is made in overwhelming force, regardless of losses, and supported by an adequate artillery preparation.

Oswin Creighton, a chaplain with the 29th Division, shared the correspondent’s misgivings and sense of foreboding. The man of God was convinced “the whole thing has been bungled. The Navy should never have started the bombardment without the Army. Now there has been no bombardment for some week. Meanwhile the Turks, under German direction, have perfected their defences.” HMS Majestic’s Cdr Charles Dix, who would help guide Australians and New Zealanders into Anzac Cove, was fully aware of the difficulties involved in this “colossal undertaking. The text books say it is impossible, whatever that may mean. Although we know we are in for a devil of a ‘doing’, we are going to have a big push for it.”

And certainly anyone who, like Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, saw the invasion fleet begin to move out could not fail to have been impressed – both by the spectacle and by the morale of the men.

“As each ship crammed with soldiers drew near the battleships, the men swung their caps and cheered again, and the sailors answered,” the future Poet Laureate John Masefield, with the Red Cross in Mudros, wrote. “The noise of cheering swelled, and the men in the ships not yet moving joined in, and the men ashore, till all the life in the harbour was giving thanks that it could go to death rejoicing.”

Cipher officer Orlo Williams watched the River Clyde get under way. The men on her – and other transports weighing anchor – were cheering. “An atmosphere of intense excitement begins to be felt – the emotion was overwhelming. Tears rolled down my cheeks as those men went so gaily to their desperate enterprise.”

On one of the transports soldiers unveiled a huge banner with a large arrow: *To Constantinople and the Harems*. The name of another had been crossed out and replaced with Turkish Delight.

Seeing the panoply of man’s might – and the men in high spirits – the gloomy Oswin Creighton suddenly found himself inspired. “Everything possible seems to have been done and the victory surely will be ours if it is for the good of the world that it should be,” he wrote.

Aboard HMS London, the Australians fell in on the quarterdeck to hear de Robeck’s order of the day, before the admiral stepped aside to allow the ship’s chaplain bless all those taking part in the great adventure. The soldiers headed to the mess deck for a last hot meal, the officers were entertained in the wardroom. “Everyone feigned cheerfulness, the wine passed



● **‘Hell burst loose on them...’ A shell lands just off SS River Clyde with lighters, cutters and steamers scattered around the shore of V Beach, Cape Helles**
Picture: Imperial War Museum/Q 61088

round,” Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett noted. “Not a word was said of what the morrow might bring forth, yet over the part, there seemed to hover the dreaded angel of death.” With nightfall, the battleship was darkened and moved north.

The wardroom of aged cruiser HMS Euryalus provided the best meal they could to their khaki guests, before a round-the-piano sing-song until at least 11pm. The officers of the Lancashire Fusiliers gave a rousing rendition of *John Peel* – “many of them singing for the last time,” the ship’s surgeon Thomas Jeans observed – before retiring for a few hours’ rest.

THE GREAT FEAT BY THE HELP OF GOD – AND THE NAVY

Aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth, the normally garrulous Ian Hamilton was quiet – his diary entry for this final day of semi-peace is one of the shortest of the entire campaign. Before retiring for the night, he issued an order of the day to his entire force:

Before us lies an adventure unprecedented in modern war. Together with our comrades of the Fleet, we are about to force a landing upon an open beach in face of positions which have been vaulted by our enemies as impregnable.

The landing will be made good, by the help of God and the Navy; the positions will be stormed, and the War brought one step nearer to a glorious close.

“Remember,” said Lord Kitchener when bidding adieu to your Commander, “Remember, once you set foot upon the Gallipoli Peninsula, you must fight the thing through to a finish.”

The whole world will be watching your progress. Let us prove ourselves worthy of the great feat of arms entrusted to us.

“I hope I may sleep tonight,” he noted before going to bed. “I think so. If not, my wakefulness will wish the clock’s hand forward.”

The defenders of the Dardanelles too had their rallying cries. An order of the day had been prepared, ready to be read out to the men the moment the enemy landed. If the enemy did succeed in getting a foothold on Turkish soil “he will be flung back into the sea.”

It was a little before 2am and a flare suddenly lit up the shore to the west of Bulair at the neck of the Gallipoli peninsula.

Armed with just eight flares and light signals, a knife and a revolver,

Lt Cdr Bernard Freyberg had swum ashore from a cutter – before the war he’d twice won the 100-yard freestyle event in his native New Zealand. He returned to the water, hauling his canvas bag behind him, swam about 300 yards then landed again, lit another flare and hid among the bushes. No Turks appeared. Freyberg moved further inland, reconnoitred a hurriedly-dug trench position, lit his third flare and swam back to the cutter. He had little idea if the enemy had taken the bait. There would be no landings at Bulair.

“GO ON!” ENTER THE ANZACS

It took a good 40 minutes for Australian troops – each fortified by a tot of rum – to clamber into the boats off HMS London: a number of pinnaces, each towing four rowing boats. Despite the 80lb of kit each man hauled, it was carried out in perfect order and perfect silence. They clustered behind the man o’war “like some great snake” for some time before someone hollered through a megaphone: *Go on*.

“Very slowly the 12 snakes of boats steamed past the battleships, the gunwhales almost flush with the water, so crowded were they with khaki figures,” Ashmead-Bartlett wrote.

Aboard destroyer HMS Ribble Australian correspondent Charles Bean – he would go on to become his country’s chronicler of the campaign – heard a lieutenant commander lean over the bridge: “Lights out, men, and stop talking. We’re going in now.”

Ribble gathered speed, the ship began to throb, and despite the darkness, the silhouettes of seven destroyers, all in line, were clearly discernible as, for the first time, was the dark outline of the Gallipoli shoreline. Six years later, writing the official history, Bean described the moment:

Every brain in the boats was throbbing with the intense anxiety of the moment: “Will the landing be a surprise, or have we been seen?” As the dull line of the land rose higher and higher above the nose of the boats, the suspense was almost unbearable. The panting of each steamboat seemed to those behind it a noise to rouse the dead. Surely, if there were men on the shore, they must presently hear it! Yet the land gave no sign of life.

Midshipman Eric Bush, manning one of HMS Bacchante’s boats, gave the order for his men to lower their muffled oars into the water to row the final yards to the beach. Some of the soldiers helped out, others adjusted their chinstraps or their rifles. It seemed that the landings had caught the Turks by surprise.

But as the first boats touched the sand, a single shot broke the silence. Flares and star shells arced over the beach, then faded. It was still dark enough for the sailors and soldiers to see the muzzle flashes of machine-guns and rifles – but light enough for the men to make out figures moving around on shore.

Adil Şahin, a shepherd conscripted with more than 30 other villagers from Büyük Anafarta, was woken in his shallow trench at the southern end of the cove by the duty sentry. “He said he thought he could see shapes out there on the water.” The platoon strained their eyes and put their hands to their ears. They could see the vague outline of boats and the slap of oars against the surface of the Aegean. The Turks opened fire. “Some fell on the beach,” Şahin recalled 70 years later. “I wasn’t sure whether we’d hit them or they were taking shelter.”

The Anzac men swarmed out of the boats quickly – some too soon in deep water, their heavy kit dragging them under the waves. Most waded through chest-high water, sometimes dragging wounded comrades along. Fountains of sand were thrown up as bullets impacted, or caused the wooden boats to splinter as they struck.

The Anzacs fixed bayonets as they dashed across the sand and shingle. Some gave a cheer as they swept up the steep paths leading off the beach to the scrub-covered hills. “Every soldier – as soon as he was landed – decided that he, and he alone, was going to be the first man into Constantinople,” Charles Dix observed, watching the Anzacs scramble up the slopes “like scalded cats.” The Ottoman capital was beyond them. But they were expected to reach the village of Boghali, four miles inland – and just two miles from the Narrows – having conquered terrain rising more than 800ft, not to mention the Turks. Surveying the scene from his stretch of beach, Charles Dix could see that every boat had been hit – his alone had been struck five times, but there had not been any serious casualties. And although seven of the wooden vessels were wrecked, otherwise it seemed the landings “had so far proved successful beyond our wildest dreams.” He could no longer see the Anzacs fighting – only hear the crack of gunfire. “It seemed as though our men were advancing.”

GREAT RESULTS HOPES HIGH AT X & Y

While the Australians and New Zealanders were scrambling up the hills north of Gaba Tepe, flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth was making her way south to support the assaults at Cape Helles. As the battleship passed Y Beach, Sir Ian Hamilton scanned the shore. Men were zig-zagging up the cliffs. Those who had reached the top were taking a

break, possibly enjoying a cigarette. The enemy had been surprised. “This promises great results to our arms,” the general noted.

A short distance along the coast, the smallest of the landing forces was also making progress at X Beach, where the soldiers had come ashore under the guns of HMS Implacable. Whatever the physical effect of the battleship’s 12in shells, the moral impact was tremendous. The soldiers crammed in the tugs and wooden boats were “simply enthralled with the sight of the cliff face being literally blown away by the ship’s guns”, Midshipman Stanley Norfolk remembered. “I think it is no exaggeration to say that morale in the boats went up 200 or 300 per cent.”

In an hour, the defenders of X – a dozen Turks – had been overcome and the Royal Fusiliers stood on top of the cliffs overlooking the beach. Not one man had been wounded, let alone killed.

LANCASHIRE LADS THE CHARNEL HOUSE BULLETS ‘LIKE WASPS’

Around Cape Tekke, sailors aboard HMS Euryalus gladly donated their rations to the men of 1st Battalion Lancashire Fusiliers before the soldiers scaled the side of the old cruiser into the waiting tows – a steam pinnace hauling three picket boats.

The 29th Division’s commander, General Aylmer Hunter-Weston, leaned over the cruiser’s side and shouted to his men: “See you in Constantinople!”

By the time the rowing boats slipped their ropes just 50 yards from the beach the sun had been up for a good hour, burning its way through the Aegean mist. The guns of the fleet, which had been pounding away for at least 45 minutes, shifted their focus to the cliffs above the sand.

It had done little to knock-out the defenders.

Bullets whizzed about Midshipman Hugh Tate’s boat “like little wasps. The whole peninsula was a mass of bursting shell and flame.” His was the third boat to touch Turkish soil. Reef actually. It ran aground 20 yards out. The men had to swim ashore. When they did reach land, they found the sands protected by barbed-wire entanglements. It took time – there were pioneers in the boats, but they were cut down just like the infantry. With typical Northern understatement, one Mancunian, a stretcher-bearer, complained it was “no picnic.”

It was no picnic for the sailors supporting the landing either. A sniper’s bullet passed through the cheeks of the coxswain of a destroyer (knocking out a couple of teeth) and killed a signaller standing next to him. As for the men in the boats, of the 80 men from Euryalus assigned to the various tows, three

out of four were casualties.

Of the 950 Lancastrians HMS Euryalus had carried into battle, one in every two was killed or wounded. Hugh Tate counted over 100 dead “on the beach alone, while the sand was stained red. A derelict cutter full of dead and waterlogged formed a basis for a temporary pier.”

A chaplain from the Royal Naval Division’s Anson Battalion moved among the wounded, tending to their spiritual more than physical needs – the constant cry was for water, but he had little to give. He could offer words of support so those mortally injured could pass into the “great hereafter at peace with all the world.”

Inner peace was all that was to be found on Lancashire Landing. Hugh Tate was struck by the bitterness of friend and foe this Sunday morning. Four men tried to hunt down Turkish snipers. Three were killed, the fourth wounded. When one of the sharpshooters was found hiding in a cave, he was bayoneted repeatedly, then thrown out of the cave. His guts spilled on to the rocks.

The beach below would pass into history as Lancashire Landing. Six of the fusiliers were awarded the Victoria Cross for their actions this Sunday morning. The same number would be presented for valour along the coast at V Beach – each medal to a sailor.

HELL AT HELLES DEEDS IMMORTAL

FIVE NAVAL VCS

The guns of HMS Albion announced the arrival of the invader at Cape Helles, hammering the natural amphitheatre with nearly 2,000 shells in just 25 minutes. Seddulbahir seemed to disappear, replaced by a red glow which hugged the contours of the land. Bricks, mortar, barbed wire, clumps of Turkish soil – all were hurled into the air. “It seemed impossible that anything could live in such an inferno,” wrote Midshipman Herbert Williams of HMS Agamemnon.

Some didn’t. Trenchworks collapsed, becoming the graves of the men who held them, a couple of heavy guns were knocked out. Otherwise, the Turkish soldiers, though battered and dazed, were mostly unharmed. They numbered a little over 100 men.

And they did not stir. The River Clyde glided in untroubled. Not a shot came from shore. She ran ashore smoothly – “without a tremor”, one staff officer noted. “No opposition. We shall land unopposed.” He could scarcely have been more wrong. The collier touched bottom around 250 feet from dry land – and not 1,000 feet from the ancient (and still intact) walls of Seddulbahir fort – further out than anticipated. And it was the cue for the Turks to respond.

It was, one rating manning a boat from HMS Cornwallis wrote, as if “the gates of hell” had opened. He was hit in the shoulder – but he was one of the fortunate ones. Half the crew were either wounded or dead as they tried to put Irish soldiers ashore. “The troops started to fall like leaves under a hail of bullets from Maxims and rifles.” The casualties remained in the boat, unable to raise their heads – every time one tried to get out, they drew Turkish fire.

Just three minutes after confidently noting the landing had gone unnoticed, the same staff officer – Lt Col Weir de Lancey Williams – had changed his tone entirely. “Tows within a few yards of shore,” he jotted in his diary. “Hell burst loose on them.” One boat was already drifting out of control, every one of its occupants dead. The other cutters were barely in any better state. When the entire crew of one, with the exception of an able seaman, were killed or wounded, the sole survivor tried to punt the cutter ashore. He was shot down dead.

As for the Trojan horse and the pontoon bridge... it too miscarried. The steam hopper which was key to forming the link between sea and land swung out of control, ran aground and could form no part of any bridge. The fall-back was to use several lighters as ‘stepping stones’ to some rocks protruding from the beach. Edward Unwin

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grabbed an able seaman, William Williams and the two men swam ashore, hauled one of the lighters and held it in position. They stood waist and neck-deep in water while the soldiers tried to file ashore down the gangways. The first four dozen to leave the safety of River Clyde were simply cut down.

“It was the Munsters who charged first with a sprig of shamrock in their caps,” Lt Cdr Josiah Wedgewood – of the pottery dynasty and also a Liberal MP – described the scene. “Then came the Dublins and the Hampshires. Dying on the lighters, on the rocks, on the beach, they cried on the Mother of God.”

William Williams was fatally wounded by either a bullet or a shell and Unwin – aged 51 – let go of the line holding the lighter in place as he tried to help the sailor. The bridge broke. Some of the Munsters swam ashore. Some waded. Some drowned.

Although Williams was dead and Unwin suffering from exposure – he returned to his ship to be wrapped in blankets – the task of keeping the lighters in place went on, again at tremendous personal risk. Midshipmen George Drewry and the shy Wilfred St Aubyn Malleson struggled in waters foaming white with the impact of bullets. Drewry tried to carry a wounded soldier ashore – until the casualty was killed by a bullet – then tried to direct the bridging operation, standing on one of the lighters until he was struck in the head by shrapnel. Patched up, he continued to haul lines until he was exhausted, at which point Malleson took over. When the lines broke, the 18-year-old tried again. Twice. Toiling with them in the lighters was a jolly, irrepressible Scotsman, AB George Samson. He was wounded at least a dozen, and perhaps as many as 19, times before he was finally carried back to the River Clyde’s sick bay. The surgeon treating him understandably found the 26-year-old “in great agony. Whether he lived or died, I knew he had won the VC.”

George Samson lived. And he won the Victoria Cross (he carried 13 pieces of shrapnel in him until his untimely death from pneumonia eight years later). As did Edward Unwin, William Williams, George Drewry and Wilfred St Aubyn Malleson.

And their efforts had succeeded. By 9am there was a battered bridge of lighters between the River Clyde and dry land. But was there any point continuing to send men ashore?

FALSE HOPES THE FLOATING DEAD ‘BUSY LITTLE LIZZIE’

Beyond the realm of commanders, the news reaching the ordinary sailors and lower decks in the invasion fleet from the beaches was nothing but encouraging.

After escaping the sinking of HMS Irresistible five weeks earlier, Horace Wilkinson had found a new home in the cruiser Dartmouth, which had loosed three-dozen shells at Fort Napoleon in the Gulf of Saros – opposite the neck of Gallipoli – as part of the diversionary attack.

Whatever tumult and turmoil there was on land, life was almost normal on the Dartmouth. There was confession, absolution, and a church service, with a 15-second sermon. Reports filtering through to Dartmouth by mid-morning suggested the landings were going well – there were already 8,000 men ashore. “A wonderful start. It surprised everybody,” the chaplain wrote to his family, adding “Of course, it is much too soon to crow!”

It was, as became all too evident to the men of HMS Queen Elizabeth, which had arrived off V Beach expecting to see troops swarming ashore, through Seddulbahir and up the peninsula. Instead, the battleship moved among the flotsam of war – capsized boats, dead and wounded in the water – while the shore was littered with dead. The troops were pinned down in dead ground, or were still stuck on the River Clyde. At the merest hint of movement, Turkish machine-guns and rifles opened. And the world’s most powerful warship was



impotent, however much her 15in guns pounded the fort and trenches overlooking the beach. “You could see them being shot again and again and yet could not help,” wrote Lt Douglas Claris, one of the flagship’s officers of the watch. “Any boat sent in was at once wiped out and so there wasn’t a chance of a rescue.”

To Ian Hamilton it was all too frustrating – “like looking on at gladiators from the dress circle.” He wanted to be on the beach, directing the battle. All he could offer as assistance was the 6in guns of the flagship, which drowned out the constant rattle and crack of machine-gun and rifle fire every few seconds. “As men fixed in the grip of nightmare, we were powerless.”

It was not, of course, how the Empire’s propaganda machine painted the Royal Navy’s wonder weapon. A little ditty was composed to celebrate the Queen Elizabeth’s impact:

**When she goes awalking out,
there’s consternation
Among the baggy-trousered
Eastern swells,
For she’s slinging Cupid’s
arrows
In the region of their
narrows,
Is our busy little Lizzie,
in the dizzy Dardanelles**

Would that war was so pleasant. V Beach resembled a butcher’s yard. Almost every observer – sailor, soldier, airman, Briton, Irishman, Scotsman, Welshman, Turk – commented on the sea turning red with blood. And it smelled awful, pervading everywhere. As did the groans of the undead. “The wounded cried out all day,” Josiah Wedgewood wrote to his friend Churchill, “in every boat, lighter, hopper and all along the shore. It was horrible.”

Overhead, Charles Samson was afforded a view of a naval battle

never granted anyone before as he tried to spot for the naval guns. So many shells and bullets were landed in the sea off Cape Helles that the water was whipped into frenzied foam. “We could see the lighters full of dead and the sea stained red with blood all along the beach.” The sands were littered with corpses. Charles Samson was a do-er, a man of action. He felt “rather rotten, sitting up there doing nothing, except spotting the ships’ fire.”

‘I CAN’T STAND IT’ SIXTH NAVAL VC

Aboard the River Clyde, Sub Lt Arthur ‘Pog’ Tisdall of the Anson Battalion, Royal Naval Division, shared the same frustrations. Unlike the general, he was able to do something about it. He could watch the slaughter of the Munsters and Dublin Fusiliers and listen to the cries and groans no longer. “I can’t stand it, I’m going over,” he said to an officer. He grabbed some sailors, jumped into the Aegean and started to bring the wounded back to the collier from the beach in cutters, using one side of the boat as cover. As they did the arms of the dying hung over the side, their hands trying to thank their rescuers. It was, Josiah Wedgewood observed, “the most pathetic thing I have ever seen.”

Tisdall and his gallant group made four or five trips to the beach, each time under Turkish fire. So perforated with enemy bullets was the boat by its final trip that one of the wounded drowned. By now, the defenders had a Maxim machine-gun trained on the rescue cutter. An officer on the River Clyde yelled that it was “sheer madness” to continue. The men returned to the relative safety of the ship. The ratings would subsequently receive

the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal for their deeds, Tisdall Britain’s highest decoration. His parents collected it from George V; Arthur Tisdall was killed by a Turkish sniper a fortnight later.

When he arrived at his headquarters in the small town of Gallipoli, Liman found “many pale faces” among his officers. They weren’t unduly perturbed by the landings – they’d expected them, just not in quite so many locations. Their general told them not to worry. The enemy had landed at exactly the sites his staff had predicted.

Liman and his adjutants rode out to Bulair at the northern end of the peninsula, where a ridge offered an unimpeded view all the way down the Gulf of Saros. From there the German could see a good 20 large vessels – a mix of warships and troop transporters – out to sea, with a few close to shore. The warships belched “an uninterrupted stream of fire and smoke” while the Germans’ viewing point was peppered with shrapnel and shells. Liman was impressed by the sight – and by the scale of the Allied operation. He estimated 200 ships and 80,000 to 90,000 men – a third as large as his Fifth Army – were involved in the Allied enterprise. “The preparations of the enemy were excellent,” the general observed, save for two shortcomings; his reconnaissance and intelligence was out of date and he had underestimated the Turkish soldier’s powers of resistance.

THE TURKS RALLY PRECARIOUS POSITION

Those powers of resistance were crumbling in the face of enemy pressure at Chunuk Bair, about a mile and a half inland from Anzac Cove. Mustafa Kemal – the future

founding father of modern-day Turkey – was appalled by the sight of his men fleeing, abandoning sacred soil to the invader. “You cannot run away from the enemy!” he implored the troops, who protested that they had run out of bullets. “If you have no ammunition, you have your bayonets.”

It was the steel the defenders needed. Over the next six hours one 700ft peak changed hands five times, ending Sunday April 25 as it had begun, occupied by Turks. By nightfall, there were scattered groups of friend and foe peppered around the crests, scrub and plateaux.

Long after dark, Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett stepped ashore at Anzac Cove.

The beach was piled with ammunition and stores, hastily dumped from the lighters, among which lay the dead and wounded, and men so absolutely exhausted that they had fallen asleep in spite of the deafening noise of the battle. In fact, it was impossible to distinguish between the living and the dead in the darkness. Through the gloom I saw the ghost-like silhouettes of groups of men wandering around in a continuous stream apparently going to, or returning from, the firing-line. On the hills above there raged an unceasing struggle lit up by the bursting shells, and the night air was humming with bullets like the droning of countless bees on a hot summer’s day.

For their efforts, the Anzacs had lost 2,000 men, the Turks a similar number. The day’s objective of Boghali was still a good three and a half miles away. No Australian or New Zealander would ever pass through the village – except perhaps as a prisoner of war.

At Y too – the beach where Ian Hamilton had sensed victory – the Turks counter-attacked. The cry passed along the lines of the Plymouth Battalion, Royal Marines Light Infantry: *Large body of troops advancing over the skyline*. There was little tactical acumen – or surprise – about the Turkish attack. They came en masse, shouting brandishing their rifles above their heads. The marines opened fire. Still the Turks came on. The guns of cruisers HMS Goliath and Dublin opened fire and scattered the attackers – but not for long. Shortly after nightfall, they resumed their assault. This time there were no cruiser guns to help the Plymouth men, just cold steel and firm hearts. The Turks got to within ten yards of the marines’ lines before a hail of bullets finally forced them back. They left their dead and wounded on the field of battle.

“The noise was awful,” recalled John Vickers. “The wounded groaning and calling for stretchers which never came, the incessant rattle of the machine-guns and rifles, the wounded and dying Turks in front calling for Allah.” The weather did not improve the mood. Rain began to fall steadily.

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In addition, the following books have been used:

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THE DAY’S END

THE QUEEN’S WRATH

THE CALIBRE OF OUR CHAPS

Darkness allowed the 1,000 men still aboard the River Clyde to finally come ashore at Cape Helles. It took three hours to get all the soldiers off the collier. “Every man who landed jumped on to the backs of dead men, the most horrible accompaniment in the world,” Josiah Wedgewood wrote.

This was exactly what the defenders of Seddulbahir feared. One junior officer sent a desperate message to his commander:

My captain, either send up reinforcements and drive the enemy into the sea, or let us evacuate this place because it is absolutely certain that they will land more troops tonight.

Send the doctors to carry off my wounded. Alas, alas my captain, for God’s sake send me reinforcements because hundreds of soldiers are landing. Hurry up. What on earth will happen, my captain?

What would happen? HMS Queen Elizabeth provided the answer. As night began to settle down over the land, the moment had come for the battleship “to give full vent to her wrath,” Ian Hamilton observed in his diary, awestruck by the most powerful weapon man could devise.

An order from the bridge, and, in the twinkling of an eye, she shook from stem to stern with the recoil from her own efforts. The great ship was fighting all out, all in action. Every gun spouted flame and a roar went up fit to shiver the stars of Heaven. Ears stopped with wax; eyes half blinded by the scorching yellow blasts.

There was still sufficient light – and sufficient gaps in the drifting acrid smoke – to see the old fort and the houses of Seddulbahir “break, dissolve into dust.” The Turks must have been killed, or at the very least stunned, Hamilton reasoned. Killed, no. Stunned possibly. But soon “the beach, the cliffs and the ramparts of the castle began to sparkle all over with hundreds of tiny flecks of rifle fire.”

Seddulbahir was the ‘blot’ on Ian Hamilton’s copybook for the day. It should have been “the softest landing of the lot” with the best harbour, but had proved by far the toughest nut. Too late, the general wished he had never set foot there and focused his efforts to the east at Morto Bay. Now, however, he was committed. The march on Constantinople would continue.

One thing is sure. Whatever happens to us here, we are bound to win glory. There are no other soldiers quite of the calibre of our chaps in the world.